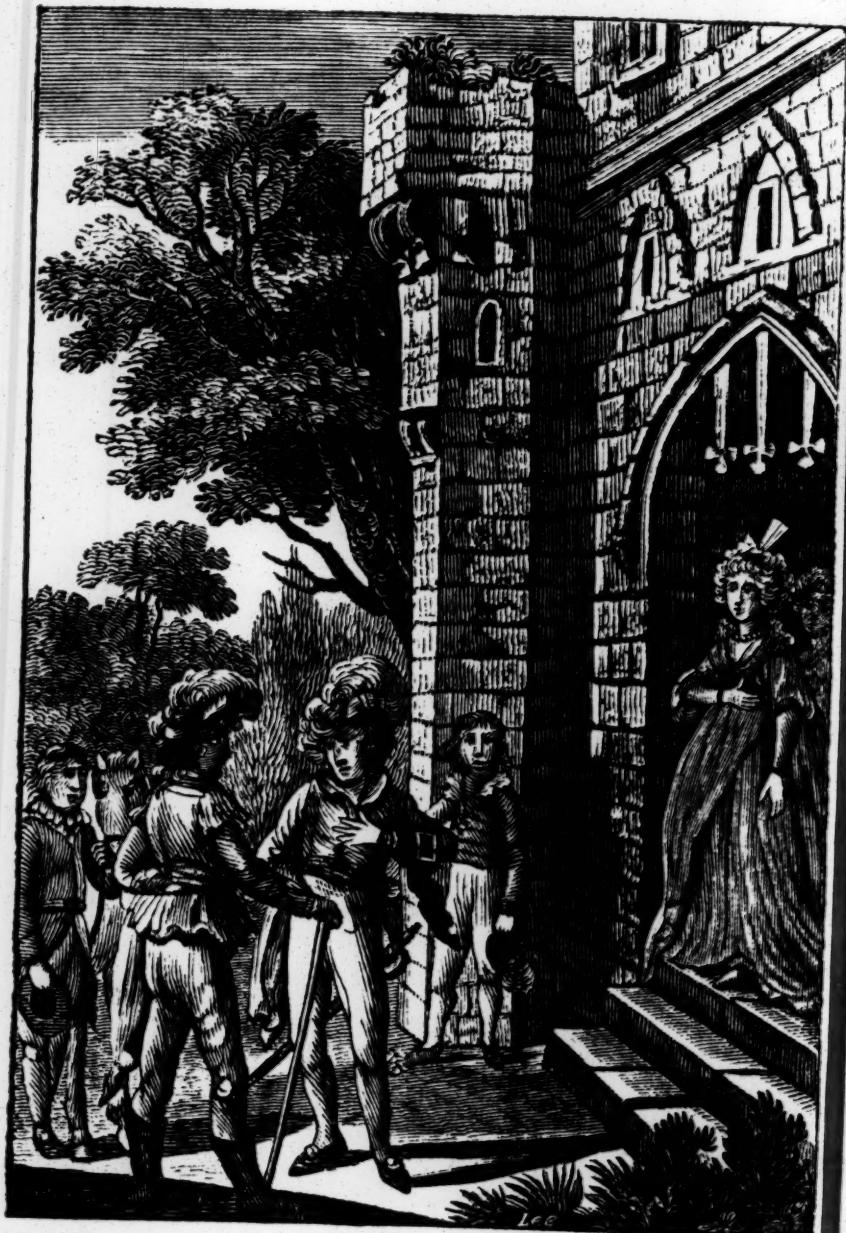


AND



AND

THE  
AGE OF CHIVALRY;

OR,

*FRIENDSHIP OF OTHER TIMES:*

A MORAL AND HISTORICAL TALE.

---

ABRIDGED AND SELECTED FROM THE KNIGHTS OF  
THE SWAN OF  
MADAM GENLIS. *K*

By C. BUTLER.

DESIGNED FOR YOUTH.

---

London:

PRINTED BY S. LOW, BERWICK STREET, SOHO;  
AND SOLD BY MRS. PRASCOCK, NO. 259, OXFORD STREET;  
AND E. BOOKER, BOND STREET.

---

1799.



## INTRODUCTION.

---

THE Work from which this abridged Selection is made, is well known to the Public as an *Historical Novel*; in which light only it can be considered, though announced by the Author, Madam Genlis, as a continuation to the *Tales of the Castle*. As a Work designed for the perusal of Youth, however great the merits in other respects, many parts have been deemed exceptionable: Such, for example, as the political subjects, and the introduction of some characters and scenes, which in a moral sense, could not afford lessons suited for the youthful mind. In consequence of which, that class of Readers for whom it was professedly written, have been wholly deprived of the entertainment

and

#### INTRODUCTION.

and information scattered throughout. The intention, therefore, has been in making this Selection, to expunge the exceptionable parts alluded to, and at the same time, preserve the Historical and Moral part with connection of the principal Story, as in the original Work of three Volumes. As such, it is presumed, the Tales in their present abridged state, may be deemed unexceptionable for the youthful Reader, and inculcate the *Moral lesson*, under the guise of amusement.

8 MAY 61

---

THE  
AGE OF CHIVALRY;

OR,

*THE COURT OF CHARLEMAGNE.*

---

HAIL! noble ages of ancient chivalry!  
To celebrate you shall be my willing task!  
It is in your glorious annals, in the historic  
page, that we must seek for examples of  
pure and constant affection, for models of  
perfect virtue, since the age in which we  
live cannot, alas! supply them.

Among the gallant warriors, the grace and  
glory of the Court of Charlemagne, were  
two distinguished young knights, not less  
celebrated for their valour and renown, than  
for the sincere and tender friendship that  
united them. They were brothers in arms

B

and

and all enterprise, danger and fortune, even their device, *Glory and friendship*, were held in common\*. On their shields were represented a swan, with these words, *Candour and loyalty*; and hence arose the surname they had at Court of the *Knights of the Swan*. Isambard and Oliver, such were the names of these two faithful friends, were in a particular manner favoured by the Emperor. They had made their first essay in arms under the eye of this hero, and he had conferred many distinctions upon them: to Oliver especially he was much attached, as having been the intimate friend of his nephew, the renowned and unfortunate Rowland, slain at the battle of Roncevau, where Oliver was likewise dangerously wounded, and who rescued his friend from the hands of the

\* In this work, a short and imperfect account only could be given of these very interesting associations. The history of those periods must be consulted for the particulars of them. In the History of France will be found, the lives of Du Guesclin, Clisson, Sancerre, Boucicaut, Bassompierre, and many others, which furnish models of that pure and elevated friendship which in the present day is considered as ideal.

enemy,

enemy, though he could not preserve his life. The dying Rowland delivered into the hand of Oliver the sword he had ennobled by so many valiant exploits; for such, in ancient times, was the most honourable gift a dying knight could bestow. Oliver sincerely regretted the loss of this hero, and the friendship of Isambard was now his only solace. In him, it might be said, were revived all the noble qualities of Rowland, blended with a disposition more interesting and more amiable. The lively and intelligent countenance of Isambard inspired joy and happiness—he possessed an unalterable evenness of temper; and such were the natural generosity and elevation of his mind, that he could make without a struggle the greatest sacrifices, and achieve the most heroic deeds. Oliver, who was two years older than his friend, was endowed with every personal advantage, and joined to every interior accomplishment an extreme sensibility and refinement; but being naturally inclined to melancholy, his countenance expressed the softer emotions of the mind. His manner and carriage were unaffected and courteous,

so that it was impossible to impute the reserve which appeared in him, either to disdain or indifference: it could only be imputed to modesty, and to a total ignorance of the advantages he possessed. Yet, notwithstanding this external calm, Oliver was under the influence of violent passions, whilst his brother in arms and more happy friend Isambard was a stranger to these painful conflicts.

In those days men were not hasty in making a choice of their partners for life; it was then an important concern, and decided the destiny and happiness of their future lives. At the Court of Charlemagne there were many beauties worthy of engaging the attention, and of inspiring the most lasting attachments. Among those who shone conspicuous, was Queen Hermengarde, the consort of Lewis\*, with Emma, Rotrude, and Birtha, the Emperor's daughters; the fair and virtuous Amalberga, and the beautiful Armoflede. But the fair one whose transcendent beauty, modesty, and virtue

\* Surnamed the Debonair, son of Charlemagne.

obtained

obtained the palm of excellence, and excited universal admiration, was Celanira, the only daughter of the renowned Witikind, that heroic chief of the Saxons who so long braved the prowess of Charlemagne, and who, though often defeated, was never subdued; who was ever able to resist superior power, and who only yielded to friendship. Enlightened by the doctrines of Christianity, he became the friend of his conqueror; and the Court of Charlemagne was now his fixed abode.

The courageous Albion of Saxony had likewise followed the example of his chief, and partook of his fortunes; and on him Witikind intended to bestow his daughter, as the reward of his toils and attachment.

Queen Hermengarde, the daughter-in-law of the Emperor, treated the Knights of the Swan with peculiar courtesy; she was said, however, to distinguish in a more particular manner Isambard, with whose entertaining converse and gaiety she seemed to be much pleased. This distinction was noticed by the courtiers, and envy soon gave it a malicious interpretation; upon which,

Isambard resolved to withdraw himself for a time from the Court, and in this view asked the Emperor's leave to travel. Oliver approved his intention, and, with a sigh, made an offer to accompany him.

"I am aware," replied Isambard smiling, "that it is a sacrifice you would make, and therefore I will not accept your offer. A secret tie, my dear Oliver, retains you here;—this is easily perceived, and may it prove the happiness of your life!"

Oliver seemed much affected; he embraced his friend.—"Were I necessary to you," said he, "I would go, and leave all for your sake—of this you are well assured; as likewise, that if I conceal a secret from you, Isambard, it is because my honour forbids me to disclose it."

In this manner parted the Knights of the Swan. Isambard, from delicacy, explained himself only in a vague manner, though he imagined he had discovered his friend's secret. He was persuaded that Oliver was attached to Armoflede, a lady in the suite of Queen Hermengarde, and a friend of the beauteous Celanira:—such, at least, had been the opinion

nion of the whole Court, as well as his own, for some time past.

## A TOURNAMENT.

ISAMBARD set off for Constantinople ; he felt a great desire to behold that celebrated Empress who filled with glory the throne of the Cæsars. Irene could not see without some emotion a French knight who was honoured with the friendship of Charlemagne\*, and Isambard was favoured with the most flattering reception. The Empress, being solicitous to display all the magnificence of her Court, had public festivals proclaimed, in which she herself was to distribute the prizes of dexterity and valour.— The Empress Irene, followed by her courtiers and attendants, repaired to the enclosure erected for the celebration of this festival ; upon whose appearance, the lists were immediately opened, and the combats began. The first who advanced on the arena was the audacious Nicephorus, who, a prey to ambition,

\* It is well known that Irene had offered her hand to Charlemagne.

presumed in secret to aspire to the supreme power, and was already meditating those guilty designs which were to overturn the fortune of Irene\*. Although the visor of his helmet was down, he was easily recognized by the height of his stature, the fierceness of his demeanour, the purple hue of his armour, and his device. Nicephorus did not long remain upon the lists; the youthful Leo, a warrior whom the Fates afterward placed upon the throne, came forth with confidence and temerity: the combat was long and obstinate; but Leo in vain had recourse to every expedient which dexterity could exhibit in opposition to strength, and he was overcome. Isambard then took his place: he was mounted on a steed of dazzling whiteness; a plume of the same colour waved over his head, and his armour was plated with gold, and adorned with pearls and sapphires. His youth and the gracefulness of his person procured him the suffrages of all beholders: his resolute yet modest demeanour formed a striking contrast to the assu-

\* Nicephorus dethroned Irene.

ing audacity of his adversary. The combat began, and victory remained for a while doubtful: the valiant Isambard received a wound in his shoulder; but at that very same instant he fell upon Nicephorus with so much violence, that he dismounted him from his steed with a single thrust.

A knight clad in black armour now presented himself on the arena, who thus addressed the Knight of the Swan: "Hitherto," said he, "thou hast been attacked without any extraordinary motive; but as for me, I feel two powerful ones. Cast thine eyes upon my shield—*Love and vengeance*: such is my device, and such are the passions which stimulate me against thee."

From this language, Isambard was at no loss to judge that his foe was the impetuous and lofty Adalgise, son of the unfortunate and dethroned king of the Lombards\*, and who was impressed with a just resentment against France. Isambard, observing the shield of Adalgise, saw with surprise the name of Armosfede inscribed in large letters, un-

\* Dedier, king of the Lombards, was vanquished and dethroned by Charlemagne.

der his device. The reader will recollect, that the Knights of the Swan had left at the Court of Charlemagne a young lady of that name, and who was generally supposed to be the object of Oliver's attachment. Isambard recollecting that Armoflede was born in Lombardy, and that she had lately taken a journey into her own country, had no doubt but that Adalgise was the rival of his friend Oliver. "Knight," said Isambard, "I read on your shield with astonishment a name which interests me, and I may venture to declare, you are thereby guilty of a great indiscretion—but deign to inform me, whether by that name you pretend to denote the same?"—"Yes," replied Adalgise; "it is the same Armoflede that abides at the hateful court of the destroyer of her country."—"It is enough," cried Isambard, interrupting him; "I contend, she has not given you authority to declare yourself her knight." Transported with rage, Adalgise rushed upon Isambard with such fury, that the Knight of the Swan staggered. A murmur of indignation was heard among the spectators, for Isambard had scarcely had

time

time to put himself in a posture of defence ; but, collecting all his force, he displayed such vigour and dexterity as relieved the beholders from their fears. Isambard, in his turn, rushed upon the Lombard prince with equal animosity and valour, and was resolved either to perish or overcome the foe of Charlemagne and the rival of Oliver. From the animosity and intrepidity of the two warriors, the efforts on both sides were incredible ; and victory seemed, for a moment, to hang over the head of Adalgise, when his horse received a deep wound and fell.— Adalgise, dismounted, lay indignantly in the dust ; his lance dropped from his hand ; and, in aggravation of his disgrace, his broken helmet fell from his head, and discovered his face besmeared with blood, and a countenance expressive of confusion, rage, and despair. Isambard then alighted from his horse, and, advancing to his enemy, seized his lance : then stretching forth his hand to assist him in rising, he thus addressed the vanquished knight :—“ Prince,” said he, “ I respect your royal birth, and still more your mis-

fortunes. I should not have made any attack upon you, had you not provoked it, and should have stood only on my defence. You are acquainted with the laws of chivalry, and those laws are inviolable: since, therefore, chance has given me your arms, I am entitled to impose conditions on you at pleasure; but I will be satisfied in merely requesting you to efface the name you bear inscribed on your shield.'

At these words, the spectators rent the air with shouts of applause, and the French knight was conducted in triumph to the Imperial tent; when the judges of the tournament declared with unanimous voice, that the first prize was due to the Knight of the Swan.

Isambard being then called, approached the throne, and, bending on one knee, received from the hands of the Empress a splendid golden chain ornamented with precious stones. Shortly after this, the Knight of the Swan, honoured with many testimonies of the Empress's esteem and kindness, took leave of that illustrious Princess, and set out for

for Spain, where the Moors were then displaying their magnificence and gallantry.— But leaving Isambard to pursue his journey, we will now return to the Court of Charlemagne.

THE COURT OF CHARLEMAGNE—A HUNT  
—THE ACADEMY OF CHARLEMAGNE.

TWO months after Isambard had left this Court to repair to Constantinople, an event of the most tragical nature occasioned universal consternation. The beauteous Celanira was found mortally wounded one evening in her father's garden. She was discovered sunk upon a seat of turf, all weltering in her blood, with Oliver lying at her feet in a state of insensibility, with his sword lying by him, and likewise wounded. The unfortunate Celanira declared, that she had been beset by assassins, who had introduced themselves into her father's house; and that at this instant Oliver, who was crossing a neighbouring wood, had heard her cries and came to her assistance; and attacking the ruffians,

ruffians, they had fallen upon him, and, after having wrenched his sword out of his hand, had plunged it into his breast. Witikind and Albion, who were from home at the time of this tragical event, returned with great precipitation: they found Celanira dying; she repeated the same particulars to them, and the next day expired in their arms. At this same period Armoflede, the friend of Celanira, retired from Court, and appeared no more. Oliver was removed to his own house in a state of insensibility: his wound was at first supposed to be mortal; at length, he recovered his senses—but a violent fever followed, in which state he lay near a month: when sufficiently recovered to mount on horseback, he obtained the Emperor's leave to travel, and withdrew himself from the scene of these disastrous events.

Six months had now elapsed since the death of Celanira, when the Emperor, desirous to give the Persian Ambassadors the diversion of hunting the buffalo, conducted them to the Black Forest \*. When arrived

\* The particulars relating to this hunt, are taken from history.

at the place of general rendezvous, Charlemagne pursued a buffalo, and darted upon the animal, thinking to sever his head with one stroke of his sabre: but the beast, being only wounded, ran full at the prince's horse, and in the violence of the shock the Emperor received a wound in his leg. The buffalo was going to repeat his attacks, when suddenly a man rushed out of the wood, and, falling upon the beast, laid it dead at Charlemagne's feet. But what was this prince's surprise, to recognise in his liberator the gallant Isambard! He gave him his hand, and affectionately embraced him: the courtiers arriving surrounded the Emperor, and pressed him to alight from his horse, that his wound might be dressed: "No," replied the prince, "I am desirous that Queen Hermengarde should see me in this condition; and it is in this manner, with my boot torn, and my leg bleeding, that I will conduct Isambard to my palace."

The Knight of the Swan, till this period, was unacquainted with the death of Celanira; and it was with equal grief and astonishment

he

he heard of her tragical end :—he was anxious to set off immediately in quest of Oliver; but the Emperor detained him a few days, that he might be admitted into the *Literary Academy* just founded by this prince, and of which the first general meeting was now at hand. Upon the day appointed for this famous assembly, the Emperor, attended by the greater part of his Court, and by all the learned men who had been collected together by Alcuin and Theodulphus \*, entered the hall of the palace. The academicians sat round a large table, and Charlemagne opened the meeting with a speech,

\* Alcuin and Theodulphus were Charlemagne's principal co-operators in the revival of letters. The Emperor assisted, and gained instruction at their lessons. He established in his own palace an Academy, composed of the great nobility of the kingdom and men of literary talents, and became himself a common member of the Academy, without any distinction that bespoke his rank. Each member of this society assumed a literary and academic name : Charlemagne, whose favourite study was the Bible, and whose ambition was to be like David, a king after God's own heart, received from the academicians the name of David.

which

which was to the following effect:—  
“ That after having extended the limits of his empire by his victories, and secured the tranquillity of the state by a new code of laws, he desired nothing farther, either for his own glory or the good of his subjects, than to add to the title of Conqueror and Legislator, that of Restorer of Letters and the Arts. Antiquity,” said he, “ furnishes us with master-pieces in every kind of literature; the study, therefore, of those great models is of indispensable necessity. It will, indeed, be difficult to equal them in the arts: but we may boast of possessing knowledge to which they were strangers: enlightened by Christianity, we ought to excel them in works of morality and virtue, that the purity of the evangelic doctrine may preserve us from those greater errors into which they fell.

“ Finally, in having assembled you here, I shew a willing example of the respect due to knowledge and talents, when united with virtue: in this place, consecrated to study, I rejoice to descend from the rank in which chance

chance has placed me, to enjoy among you the only distinctions of real value, those which are the fruits of study and wisdom. The union which prevails in this society will ever subsist, because it is founded upon esteem, and conformity of opinion and sentiment. You all share with me the love of our country, and zeal for our religion ; and you will never forget, that to the sublime morality of our holy faith you owe every thing I have done for the felicity of my people.—By its beneficent doctrines, we have too been able to fix among us the brave and generous chieftain of the Saxons ; an event which has procured us the alliance of that warlike people —and it was its maxims, likewise, which induced me to forego all other considerations with the vanquished nations, but that of the abolition of those horrible and bloody sacrifices \* which dishonoured human nature. In a word, it is Religion that has commanded me to liberate millions of slaves, and to secure to every Christian the rank of a free

\* The Saxons sacrificed human victims.

citizen ;

citizen; and it is her doctrines alone that can maintain among the people the love of order and justice, and form virtuous citizens as well as good kings. Such are her benefits—such the salutary influence and utility of Religion and Virtue."

#### A SORROWFUL RE-UNION.

ON the morrow of the academic meeting, Isambard, whose thoughts were wholly engrossed with Oliver, left the Court attended by a single 'squire, and set out in quest of his friend, taking the road to an ancient castle belonging to Oliver, situated at the extremity of the Black Forest. After thirty hours ride, he arrived within three leagues of the castle, when, hearing the sound of horses' feet behind him, he turned his head, and with extreme satisfaction perceived his friend near him, whom he hastened to meet. Oliver, when he saw Isambard approach, alighted from his steed, and embraced him. Oliver then took him by the hand, led him to the foot of a tree, and, making Isambard sit down beside him, thus addressed him:—

" My

“My dear friend, this is the first moment of satisfaction I have experienced for six months. I flatter myself, that we shall now part no more, for I am determined to follow you wherever you go. I have, however, a favour to request of you—my heart, in spite of friendship, cannot open itself to confidence:—do not make enquiries after what has passed during your late absence; and whatever singularity you may remark in my behaviour, do not, I conjure you, question me upon it.”

While Oliver was thus expressing himself with a faltering voice, Isambard, whose eyes were fixed upon him, saw with inexpressible concern the wan countenance of his friend, in which appeared the deepest traces of grief and melancholy, added to a look in which there was something even frightful. His shield, too, was covered with a black crape that entirely concealed his device.

After a moment’s silence, Isambard took the hand of his friend, and, pressing it to his bosom, “Thou knowest,” said he, “thy wish is a law to me.”—“It is sufficient,” replied Oliver: saying which, he arose; Isambard followed;

followed; and both the knights remounting their steeds proceeded to the castle, where they soon arrived. On the following day, Oliver informed his friend of his intention to travel. "I have," said he, "a singular desire to roam about; and since I have been in the languid state in which you now see me, I have never continued many days in the same place." Isambard replied, that he was ready to accompany him; upon which the horses were ordered, and the two knights, attended by their 'squire and page, left the castle.

## THE JOURNEY.

THE friends proceeded slowly on, stopping frequently to repose under the shade of a spreading tree, or ascending an eminence to view the country around; and thus solaced themselves with the beautiful scenes that offered in their route. But the sorrow of the unhappy Oliver was too deeply rooted to be removed; nor indeed was there any mitigation to it, but that which the friendship of his brother in arms the faithful Isambard afforded.

afforded. In the course of this journey, the entreaties of Isambard at length prevailed, and Oliver deposited in the bosom of friendship the secret of his griefs, and those misfortunes which had befallen him during the absence of his friend from the Court of Charlemagne.

The cause of those woes which the wretched Oliver so justly deplored, was a hasty and clandestine marriage. He had become deeply enamoured of the beautiful Celanira, daughter of Witikind already mentioned. This lady, whose superior beauty and amiable qualities rendered her so worthy the admiration of all who beheld her, and one of the principal ornaments of the Court of Charlemagne, was, unknown to all, the wife of Oliver. Added to his distinguished merit and accomplishments, Oliver was also the deliverer of the father of Celanira, the preserver of his life.\* Such an obligation was not to

be

\* In a battle fought between the Emperor Charlemagne and the Saxons, in which the latter were totally subdued, it is related, that in the general rout which took place among the Saxon troops, Witikind, one of the chiefs, was

found

be repaid — gratitude and esteem became affection, which soon overpowered the too sensible and charming daughter of Witikind: her reason, her duty, her natural rectitude of mind, were all insufficient against a passion that at last proved irresistible; and after the various conflicts which a virtuous mind always undergoes in departing from the *right path*, she secretly espoused Oliver, though the promised wife of another. But from this period, instead of joy and happiness, succeeded remorse and self-condemnation; a regret caused by the reflection on having deceived the confidence of an affectionate parent, and by the just dread of his resentment upon the discovery of the marriage. In the relation given by Oliver to his friend, of the misfortunes which occur from this period,

found by a French knight, dangerously wounded, sitting under a tree alone, at some distance from the army, and almost expiring from the loss of blood. It is added, that the French knight, so far from taking advantage of the situation of the Saxon hero, gave him every assistance, and, dismounting from his own horse, placed Witikind upon it, who, by this means, was saved likewise from being taken prisoner. After this the Saxons entered into a treaty with Charlemagne.

he

he proceeds as follows:—“ That union, of which I had formed to myself so enchanting an idea, proved to me a source of misery—for such was the affection I bore Celanira, that for her felicity I was more anxious than for my own; and from the time of our marriage I never saw her but overwhelmed with remorse and sorrow. Whenever mention was made of virtue, filial piety, the sacredness of a vow, she would blush, turn pale, and imagine she was hearing her own condemnation. Confidence now forsook our converse; I concealing from her to what excess she rendered me wretched and she endeavouring to hide from me her sufferings: and thus it was that the most ardent affection served only to increase our secret woes. In this manner passed several months, when Witikind informed his daughter, that Albion, languishing under the wounds he had received in Saxony, was coming to France for medical assistance. Witikind added, that Albion had no hope of recovery, and he came principally in the wish to die near his friends. In a few days after, Albion arrived, and the physicians who

were consulted, judged his case to be mortal. The day after this opinion was given, I saw Witikind, and, being alone with him, he spoke to me of Albion.—“ My dear Oliver,” added he, “ you alone could console me under such a loss; but, if I may believe report, it is no longer in your power to restore a son to the father of Celanira.” These words he pronounced in a manner which demanded a reply; but the confused mixture of contrary sensations, of remorse and gratitude, entirely deprived me of the power of answering. I flammered out a few broken expressions, and Witikind took my distress for an avowal of my secret marriage with Armoflede. Thy generous heart, my dear Isambard, can conceive what this offer of friendship from Witikind must have made the seducer of his daughter feel.—The unfortunate Celanira was but too deeply impressed with these distressing reflections. “ Alas!” cried she, “ Providence and parental tenderness reserved me a felicity which ought to have been the reward of virtue! What then will be my feelings, when the best of fathers, in presenting me the lover

for whom I have betrayed him, shall say, In recompence of thy filial piety and obedience, I give thee Oliver for a husband!"

The Knight of the Swan then proceeds to the sequel of his unhappy story, and discloses to his friend the crime he has been guilty of. Led on by the insidious arts of Armosfede\*, he consents to accompany this lady to a country villa, where Celanira is gone, and where he is to behold the proof of the infidelity of a wife he adores. Oliver does not for a moment credit the tale of calumny, as told by the perfidious Armosfede; but, in the intention of confuting her wickedness only, is prevailed upon to go to the nocturnal meeting. The trial, however, proves too great for the unfortunate Knight: on being led to the pavilion in the garden, he there sees, at midnight, his beloved Celanira, sitting by the side of a young man, weeping, and holding both his hands in *hers.* At this sight, Oliver is no longer him-

\* The character of Armosfede is represented throughout, under the allurements of youth and beauty, as the most artful and wicked of her sex, and secretly guilty of every enormity.

self—

self—he rushes toward the pavilion with his sword drawn; when Celanira, upon hearing his voice, coming toward the door to meet him, he plunges the sword in her bosom, then turns the point of it to his own heart, and falls beside the victim of his fury. In this state was the dying Celanira found, as has been already mentioned, and who recovered sufficiently to make the declaration, that she was attacked by russians, and that Oliver had come to her assistance, and in defending her was wounded. And thus the wretched Knight was considered as the defender, not the murderer, of Celanira. His crime remained unknown; but this could not remove the secret stings and bitter remorse of a guilty mind. The unhappy Knight had still further cause of wretchedness, when he learnt upon his recovery, that the young man he had seen in the pavilion was the brother of Celanira, who was supposed to have fallen in the last battle fought by the Saxons; but coming secretly into France, he had written to his sister, and requested a private interview in the absence of his father; which being known to the per-

fidious Armoflede, served too well for the purpose she had in view of weaning the affection of Oliver, not supposing him married to Celanira. The Knight, concluding his sad story, addresses his friend in the following words:—“ Yo uimagine, perhaps, my dear Ifambard, that I have finished the story of my woes; but a cruel scene remains to be told. After a month my wounds closed, the delirium and fever had left me. I then determined, as soon as I was able to quit my bed, to leave the scene of these disastrous events, and to travel. On the morning of my departure, I had scarcely put on my clothes, when I saw Witikind enter my room! I uttered a piercing cry, and, covering my face with my hands, fell almost senseless into a chair. He rushed toward me, and, clasping me in his arms, exclaimed, ‘ Oh! my son, Albion is just expired. I was prepared for this event, for I knew his wounds were mortal: but I have no more children. I am told, too, thou art going to travel. What! is the generous defender of my daughter resolved to leave us?’

“ I shud-

“ I shuddered: I arose seized with horror at finding myself in the arms of Witikind. Represent to thyself, Isambard, this unhappy father pressing to his heart the murderer of his daughter, and lavishing on him acknowledgements of the tenderest gratitude. The reflections, too, which followed this interview filled up the measure of my sufferings. Albion was no more, and I knew that Witikind destined his daughter for me. Thus, had I listened to reason, I should, after seeing Celanira, have instantly quitted the spot she inhabited. The death of Albion would have disengaged her, and Witikind would have recalled me. I should then have returned worthy of her, and the happiness that was reserved for me. Ah! what would my present felicity have been, had I known how to govern my passion! Alas! it is only in the dreadful state into which I am now plunged that I have learned to know, virtue alone should be our guide, and that the sacrifices she requires are as necessary for our peace as subservient to the means of our happiness: unless we possess that virtue, and it is made the rule of our conduct, there can be

no felicity even in this life; but with it there can be no situation wholly without hope and consolation."

The unhappy Oliver having finished the recital of his woes, the friends pursued their journey.

#### THE SHIPWRECK.

THE two brothers in arms casting their eyes upon the island which lay over against them, observed the sudden appearance of women under great distress, followed by several children, who were making loud lamentations. This little group advanced to the banks of the lake, still looking toward the east, and the Knights of the Swan found they were watching a boat which was on the point of being swallowed up by the billows. At this moment Zemni, the page of Oliver, came up to him, and told him that near the shore, where he had been waiting, a boat with two men was in great danger of sinking. As the two friends were excellent swimmers, they instantly flew to their relief, and, taking off their cuirasses and shields,

followed

followed Zemni. In the boat were an old man, who seemed to be a fisherman, and a younger one decorated with the marks of knighthood. Oliver cried out to him to throw his armour into the lake; but in the very instant a gust of wind overset the boat, and the unknown knight and his conductor would have perished, if the generous friends had not plunged into the lake. Isambard caught hold of the old man, and brought him quickly to shore:—Oliver in the meanwhile was succouring the younger one, but the weight of his armour dragged him down in spite of every effort. Isambard, who had committed the old man to the care of the squires, dashed a second time into the lake, and assisted in saving the unknown knight, whom they at last brought happily to land, and who, in a short time, recovered his sences, and was able to express a sense of his gratitude to his deliverers. The squires opened their portmanteaus in order to furnish the strangers with linen and clothing, they all sat down upon the grass to wait till the storm, which now began to abate, was quite over; and the unknown knight thus

expressed himself:—“ Signors, I shall ever bless the accident which has afforded me the happiness of meeting two knights, as generous as they are celebrated by their exploits and faithful friendship. Life has been long odious to me; but it will become less burthensome on the recollection that you have expos'd yours to preserve it. My name is Giaffar—I am the subject of a German prince, the amiable and valiant Gerold, Count of Bavaria:—my misfortunes and a sacred duty oblige me, guided as I am by a slight degree of hope, to wander over Europe. I am continually roving, and, having visited this canton, crossed over to the little island, where I met with all that virtue and hospitality had to bestow.” Here the boatman, interrupting Giaffar, entreated the three warriors to pass the night in his cottage.—“ My sons,” continued he, “ will soon return: add then to the benefits already received, that of affording my whole family the happiness of seeing our deliverers.” The Knights of the Swan consented. The old man then perceived a boat upon the lake, in which he could descry his two sons. They came

came on shore, and expressed their gratitude to the generous knights, who had thus saved the life of their father. As the tempest was now subsided, they began to think of crossing the lake, and all repaired to the old man's cottage; who, upon landing, was surrounded by his little family, whose joy was inexpressible at again embracing their father. When these first transports were abated, Giaffar proposed a walk, which was agreed to. They wandered over the little island, in which were a field, an orchard, and a neat garden, belonging to the boatman's little dwelling. At the hour of supper, the knights, together with the whole family, sat down at one table—except the two eldest children, who waited on the guests. Giaffar placed himself between Isambard and Oliver; to the latter he became exceedingly interesting, as he appeared to be sunk in deep melancholy. Oliver had noticed the device of his shield, upon which was represented a foreign plant growing upon the top of a mountain in the midst of rocks; and around this emblem were these words, *To find her, or die.* Oliver did not venture to request the

explanation of this, but proposed several questions to Giaffar, and asked him whither he intended to go on leaving the island.—“ I am obliged,” replied Giaffar, “ to suspend my travels for some time, because the orders of Gerold, my sovereign, call me to the duchy of Cleves, where I shall remain as long as he has occasion for my services.” Oliver and Isambard, who had heard but a confused report of that enterprise, begged he would give them some particulars relative to it, and Giaffar hastened to satisfy their curiosity.—“ You know, Signors, that Gerold was to have married Beatrice, the Duchess of Cleves \*: the father of this princess had concerted the marriage on his death-bed, which at first was only founded on policy. Beatrice, the sole heiress of her father’s dominions, respected his last will, and received Gerold at her court as her intended husband. This

\* In these ages there really existed a Duchess of Cleves, of the name of Beatrice. History informs us that the neighbouring princes persecuted and besieged her; that she was delivered by a brave French knight, and that she married her benefactor. This knight bore a swan upon his buckler, and the Duchess instituted the order of the *Knights of the Swan*.

prince

prince had never seen her before this period. He knew that she was one of the handsomest princesses in Europe; but he found her so much superior to the description given, that he conceived a passion for her, of which, till that moment, he did not believe himself susceptible. This young prince, who had so often feigned sentiments which he never felt, found Beatrice equally cold and incredulous. The Duchess, who was prejudiced against him, heard him with indifference, and satisfied herself with replying, that she should prove constant to her engagements, if he persisted in the desire of marrying her: but she added, that, fearing the natural levity of his disposition, of which he had already given such proofs, she required he should absent himself from her for a whole year; and if, at the expiration of that time, he returned with the same sentiments, she would marry him without further delay. Gerold was obliged to submit; and he undertook a journey to divert his grief. It is said, that absence served only to increase his passion, and that he appeared occupied by no other object; but, toward the end of this

probationary year, he was suddenly overwhelmed with the deepest sorrow, and wrote to the Duchess that he ceased to claim her hand, without alleging the motives of so unaccountable a change. And what is still more extraordinary, in a fortnight after, Gerold repaired to the Court of Beatrice, and threw himself at her feet, with all the demonstrations of the sincerest passion, to implore her forgiveness. Beatrice received him with disdain, told him he had cancelled the engagement—that she was now free, and renounced for ever the union. When Gerold had lost all hopes of making her relent, he gave a loose to the violence of his disposition; and resolving to obtain by force what he could not by other means, he returned to his dominions to levy troops. In the meanwhile the neighbouring princes, hearing that the marriage of Beatrice was broken off, eagerly made tender of their homage, which met with no better reception than Gerold's. Most of these rejected princes betrayed a keen resentment; and Beatrice, disdaining every suitor, found herself soon surrounded by dangerous and powerful enemies. During these

these transactions, Gerold arrived with a small army: his design was to besiege the Duchess in her castle; but the rival princes opposed him, and many combats took place between them. The Duchess then wrote to Gerold, and the principal chiefs, to demand a cessation of arms for six months, without engaging herself to marry any one of them, but promising only to take the matter into consideration, and to give a definitive answer at the end of the truce. This letter, which afforded a glimpse of hope to her lovers, produced the effect she expected: the truce was granted, and the troops withdrawn. But it was soon known that the Duchess began to strengthen the fortifications of her castle, and to give reception to a number of strangers there. The truce will be shortly over, when I must repair to the duchy of Cleves, and remain there, in the service of my prince, during the siege; after which I shall resume my travels."—"What," said Isambard, "will you, Signor, increase the number of the enemies of this illustrious princess?"—"I must allow," replied Giaffar,  
"that

“that the enterprise of Gerold is unjust; yet, he had received the promise of Beatrice: it is likewise certain that he never ceased to love her; and should a moment of error disengage her from her word so solemnly given?” The conversation was prolonged till the time of retiring to rest. The Knights of the Swan were then conducted to a small chamber which had been prepared for them; and when they were alone, Isambard perceiving his friend relapsing into his usual melancholy condition, thus addressed him:—“Dear Oliver, we have passed a day which surely has, in some degree, suspended the sense of thy misfortunes; we have saved the lives of two men: a virtuous family blesses us; thou hast done a good action.”—“I have done a good action!” cried Oliver, interrupting him: “No, believe me; thou alone wert generous—thou, whose life is so pure.”—“Oliver,” replied Isambard, “thine is still valuable, since thou canst make such benevolent use of it, and that of a friend is so truly attached to it.”—“My dear Isambard, tenderness and the softer emotions are suited

to

to thy soul, but they are no longer within the reach of thy unhappy friend : I am involved in that dreadful state in which the pressure of insupportable misery allows me not to withdraw a single instant from myself. Alas ! whose misfortune can equal mine ? The stranger, for example, who so bitterly laments his fate, has a *slight degree of hope.*" After having thus given vent to his grief, Oliver fell into a deep melancholy. Isambard looked at his friend in silence, and with tears invoked heaven in his behalf.

The succeeding day the Knights of the Swan, notwithstanding the pressing invitation of their good host, took leave of the island. Giaffar departed likewise at the same time, and the knights continued their route together. The story of Beatrice had greatly interested Isambard ; he touched again upon the subject in his conversation with Oliver, who, perceiving his friend had a strong desire to go and make tender of his service to that princess, told him he would accompany him thither. This proposal was very pleasing to Isambard, and they agreed

to

to repair immediately to the duchy of Cleves, accompanied by Giaffar.

## THE TABLETS.

AFTER six days journey, Giaffar and the Knights of the Swan entered a forest, in which they lost their way. They were now in the duchy of Cleves, and not far distant from the palace of the Princess ; but, having gone out of the road, they were unable to recover the path. Tired with their fruitless research, they determined to stop where they were, and send their 'squires to find out the road. The 'squires then separated, and each took a different route through the forest ; and the three Knights, alighting from their horses, retired under a large oak. Oliver and Giaffar remained standing, leaning against the tree ; and Isambard seated himself upon a heap of dried leaves, for it was now the decline of autumn. The conversation ran upon Beatrice and Gerold, and Giaffar expressed his regret at being engaged on the side of the latter. " How pleasing it would be to me," added he, " if I could accom-

pany

pany two such friends, and fight in the defence of so interesting a person as this princess is represented to be ! ” While Giaffar was thus speaking, Isambard thought he felt a stone beneath him, among the leaves upon which he sat : on examining, he was much surprised to find, instead of a stone, a set of beautiful golden tablets. They were open ; and the Knight, looking with great curiosity at what they contained, perceived that some detached thoughts had been written in the first leaves, and he read as follows :—

“ Great fortune, and elevated rank, often deprive their possessors of the gratification of being beloved ; people are attached to them by interest ; and the mind being engrossed by such views, it is taken off from the contemplation of real worth. As the sole object is to mislead or govern Princes, more attention is paid to their follies than their good qualities. Hence it is, that Princes in their turn are solicitous only of forming agreeable connections, utterly despairing ever to find true friends,” &c.

“ The writer of these observations,” said Giaffar, “ expresses them with a frankness that

that pleases me."—"Yes," returned Isambard, "I am sure the person who wrote these sentences loves only truth, and never flattered any one."—"These tablets, no doubt, belong to some one of the Duchess's court," said Giaffar.—"Perhaps to Beatrice herself," replied Isambard: "would it were she! with what pleasure should I combat for one who thinks and expresses herself in this manner! And do not the accounts we hear, agree in extolling the sense, knowledge, and refined taste of the Duchess of Cleves? I doubt not but these tablets are hers; and that she is not only the most beautiful, but the most amiable Princess in the universe."—

"My dear Isambard," said Giaffar, "I perceive you never speak of this Princess but with rapture."—"I may venture to affirm," replied Isambard, "that friendship will ever be my ruling passion;—yet, if these tablets contain her own sentiments, I must allow it may be difficult not to love as well as admire such a person." As Isambard finished these words, he saw Zemni approach, who informed the Knights, that on getting out of the forest he had seen a

large

large mansion upon the slope of a hill, where he made inquiry after the different roads which led to the Duchess's castle ; and that the master of the house, a venerable old man, invited the Knights under his roof, promising to furnish them with guides, and every information of which they stood in need.— The Knights accepted the invitation, and, conducted by Zemni, they repaired to the asylum offered. They soon perceived it at a distance, by the signals of hospitality with which it was decorated. These were, according to the customs of the times, helmets upon the points of lances, placed upon the house-top to give notice to the traveller who had lost his way, that the abode belonged to a knight who offered him reception. The Knights arrived at a spacious but simple mansion, surrounded with beautiful gardens. Theobald, for such was the owner's name, came to bid them welcome. This venerable old man, accompanied by Silvia, his daughter, conducted the guests into a grand gallery. The amiable Silvia disarmed the Knights, and afterwards went to prepare them

them refreshments, which she brought and presented herself \*. The Knights having informed Theobald of the object of their journey : "Sir," said he, addressing one of the friends, "I learn with joy, that the Knights of the Swan are going to combat in behalf of the most virtuous and amiable princess in the universe—I am," continued Theobald "her subject, and have had the honour of being her preceptor: you may, therefore, conceive how much I am interested in the persecution she is suffering! Long retired from the court, I have fixed myself in an agreeable retreat, in the vicinity of the castle of the princess, who, before the arrival of the hostile troops, frequently visited my solitude. I am now separated from her by the camp of the confederate princes: these princes however, have had the generosity to declare, that my house shall remain unmolested even during the war, should war take place, and I live in as much tranquillity as at the present moment I can enjoy. I am even

\* All these particulars are taken from the customs and manners during the ages of chivalry.

frequent

repeatedly honoured with the visits of these  
princes : at this very instant," continued the  
old man, " several knights of both parties  
are walking in my gardens ; and these inter-  
views are conducted with equal politeness on  
both sides : you see upon this ceiling their ar-  
mour suspended by the side of your own."—

" Yes," said Giaffar, " I recognise the ar-  
mour and green plume of Gerold".—Upon  
this, Isambard, curious to know the device  
of that prince, arose, and, examining the  
buckler, saw a horse represented upon it in  
the act of leaping over a high gate, and  
these words were written round the shield :  
*Obstacles and danger inflame my ardour.*—  
After this examination, Isambard, desiring to  
obtain information respecting a more inter-  
esting matter, approached the old man, and  
with some degree of confusion related the  
adventure of the tablets, which he showed.  
Theobald immediately exclaimed, that he  
knew them, and that they belonged to the  
Duchess. At these words, Isambard felt a  
violent throbbing at his heart. " I confess,"  
said he, " I have had the indiscretion to read  
these tablets ; but, Sir, look at the writing ;

is

is it truly the hand of the Princefs?"—"Yes," replied Theobald; "and doubtless she must have written these thoughts in the forest, where she frequently walked alone, on leaving this mansion. But, Sir, you will deliver them to her yourself, and she will be happy at the chance which threw them into the hands of one of her defenders."—"May I ask you another question?" said Isambard. "You have just been speaking of the war as an uncertain event; is it supposed, then, that the Duchess will at length choose a husband among the princes who are assembled to oppose her?" "Signor," replied Theobald, "Beatrice has conducted herself in this respect with so much discretion, that even the knights who are met to defend her, and have been at her Court for some months past, are yet ignorant whether all these preparations will end in war, or in a tournament and wedding. The truce expires in eight days; the Duchess will then be summoned by the Princes to declare her intentions; until then, they will remain an impenetrable secret."—Isambard was going to continue his questions, when the doors of the gallery opened,

opened, and the Count of Bavaria with his friend the Duke of Spoleto made their appearance. The former uttered an exclamation of joy on perceiving Giaffar; he flew to him and embraced him—Giaffar then presented the Knights of the Swan to him, informing him, he owed his life to them.—Gerold, though apprised of the motive of their journey, treated them with equal grace and politeness: even Isambard, prejudiced as he was against him, could not help admiring the nobleness of his countenance, and the gracefulness of his whole deportment. The princes soon retired, when Theobald and the Knights sat down to table.

On the following evening Theobald received a secret commission from Beatrice, delivered to him by Lancelot, a French Knight from the Court of Charlemagne, and a friend of the Knights of the Swan, who asked him many questions relative to the Court of Beatrice, as Lancelot had been some time there.

“ You will find there,” said he, “ several French knights; Angelbert, young Roger, Archambald,

Archambald, and some others ; you will likewise see Oger the Dane, who is but lately arrived. We have too, another warrior, who might be named with us, on account of his attachment to Charlemagne, which is Gramaldo, Duke of Beneventum. You will likewise see other princes on our side ; Theudon, King of Pannonia, and the four sons of Duke Aimon. After these particulars respecting the warriors, they spoke of the Duchess, and the ladies of the court.—Lancelot launched out in praise of Beatrice, in such a manner, that the three Knights judged he must be enamoured of her.—“ I do not possess so much temerity,” replied Lancelot : “ the insensibility of which she has given so much proof, and which has assembled us all about her, is a preservative from the danger of her charms : among us, hitherto, the King of Pannonia only has ventured to declare himself her lover. For my own part, I profess myself the knight of the young and charming Delia, the favourite of Beatrice, who, with a countenance expressive of the tenderest sensibility, and enchanting sweetness of manners,

ners, has a heart as inaccessible to love as that of Beatrice herself. The other young ladies attached to the Duchess are all distinguished by the gracefulness of their persons, and the cultivation of their minds."—Oliver likewise asked several questions relative to the confederate princes.—"I have been twice in their camp," answered Lancelot: "they are much superior in number to us, and have many chiefs among them formidable for their talents and valour. Among others, Gerold, and the Duke of Spoletto, are passionate admirers of Beatrice; as also Henry, Duke of Friuli, and the ambitious Hartrad, Count of Thuringia. Constantine, Prince of Greece, and son of the famous Irene, is expected likewise to join the confederate princes."—After these explanations, Lancelot assured the two friends, that Beatrice, being informed of their arrival, expected them with impatience. Oliver and Isambard then promised to join her standard the day after the morrow; when Lancelot took his leave, and returned the same evening.

## UNFORESEEN TROUBLE.

ON the day appointed, the two friends took an affectionate farewell of the sage Theobald, and Giaffar immediately set out for the Court of the Duchess of Cleves.— This Princefs wholly engaged the thoughts of Isambard ; and when he perceived the towers of the castle, and the white and azure standard which waved from the top of the edifice, he experienced a sensation of joy, blended with disquietude. The spacious castle of Cleves is situated on the summit of a majestic mountain, on which are seen rocks and woods interspersed and plants of various kinds : prolific springs of the purest water issue from the rocks, forming cascades and streams, which fall and meander among the cypresses and pines, and then water the meadows below.—An ancient and gloomy forest almost encircles the mountain ; on the other side lies an extensive plain on the banks of the Rhine. Arriving at the first guard, the Knights declared their names, and

the

the motives of their journey: then being escorted by two soldiers they proceeded forwards—when near the castle the soldiers blew a horn, which was a signal that announced to the Princess the arrival of her new defenders. Immediately an answer was given by the sound of drums and trumpets. At last, having gained the summit of the mountain and passed all the fortifications, they came to the drawbridge, which was instantly let down. Then a crowd of 'squires and pages belonging to the Duchess waited for the Knights: they led them through several spacious courts, to the sound of military music; all this preparation redoubled Isambard's emotion—and when drawing near to the steps which led to the apartments of the palace, and where they alighted from their steeds, he experienced such a palpitation of heart, that he took the arm of his friend:—Oliver remarking this extraordinary agitation smiled, and almost at the same instant sighed, on recollecting his first interview with Celanira. The embarrassment of Isambard still increased, when he perceived at the top of the steps a group of ladies superb-

ly dressed: one of them clothed in silver brocade, in the midst of the circle, was advanced some paces before the rest, when one of the 'quires informed the Knights it was the Princess herself\*. The Knights quickened their pace, and arrived at the foot of the stairs: they could then distinctly see the Duchess. But no sooner had Isambard cast his eyes upon her, than, struck with astonishment, he started back, and looked at his unhappy friend. Oliver, pale and trembling, his eyes fixed on the ground, appeared motionless. The Duchess observed them for a moment with much attention; after which, she addressed both the Knights of the Swan, and, in the most gracious manner inviting them to accompany her, entered the palace. Isambard, who now thought only of his unfortunate friend, in his turn lent him the assistance of his arm. Oliver, calling forth all his fortitude, mounted the stair, and soon became more composed. In the great hall of the palace they met Lancelot and

\* Beatrice, in coming out to meet the Knights, acted conformably to the customs of her time, and the treatment shewn to Knights.

Angelbert,

Angelbert, who came and embraced them : when Lancelot addressing the two friends, “ You have seen the Princess,” said he, “ and were you not much struck with the astonishing resemblance between her and the unhappy daughter of Witikind? I blame myself for not having spoken of this to Oliver, to whom this likeness must renew the painful remembrance of a tragical scene, and intended to have mentioned the circumstance in our last interview, but forgot it.” Oliver stammered a few broken syllables in reply, which Isambard hastened to interrupt, observing, “ that he himself had experienced equal surprise and emotion.”—“ Yet,” observed Angelbert, “ it is not one of those miraculous likenesses, of which so many instances are to be found in romance ; on examining Beatrice, you will find considerable difference between her and Celanira. Beatrice is not light-haired ; her eyes are dark, and her eyebrows likewise, and larger than those of Celanira ; her mouth is not so small, and her nose, though of the same form, is still more delicate : but that resplendent clearness of complexion, that same look, that expression

of candour and sensibility, a similar tone of voice, the same size, and an uncommon similitude of manners and deportment, produce an illusion which will affect you a hundred times a-day; by reviving the image of the most interesting person we ever saw in the Court of Charlemagne."

This conversation was fortunately interrupted: it was now time to repair to the drawing-room, and determine upon seeing the charming Beatrice again. Oliver avoided looking at her; Isambard gazed on her with admiration, mingled with remorse: for while enraptured at the pleasure of hearing and seeing her, he now considered himself as the rival of his friend, from the fatal resemblance that subsisted; though at the same time persuaded, that nothing could render Oliver faithless to the memory of Celanira. — Isambard had a restitution to make, and accosting the Duchefs, he presented her the tablets, relating in what manner they had fallen into his hands. Beatrice blushed, and requested him to keep them: "I flatter myself," added she, "that in examining my conduct, you will ever find it consonant with

the

the maxims those tablets contain.”—Isambard received the precious gift with transport, and considered it as a happy presage to his wishes.—Oliver, who had been ill at ease since he had entered the palace, went out on pretext of visiting the fortifications. An instant after he was followed by Isambard; when they met, a moment’s silence took place from a mutual embarrassment: at last, Oliver affectionately taking the hand of his friend, said, “ My dear Isambard, I easily perceive what is labouring in your mind—Ah! may the new passion with which you are inspired, prove a source of felicity to you—’tis all I now can wish for:—Beatrice, it is true, resembles *her*, but it is not *she*? You will understand this distinction, and it ought to be sufficient to remove all your apprehensions.”—“ It is certain,” replied Isambard, “ that my admiration of Beatrice may soon lead me to a still stronger attachment; but my passion must be without hope, for how can I encourage any? Beside, have I not devoted my life to thee; and can I ever form an idea inconsistent with that sacred engagement?” Oliver pressed the hand

of his friend to his bosom, and was unable to reply ; when some Knights approaching put an end to the conversation.

At night, the two friends were shown to their apartments ; where they found arms of curious workmanship, rich mantles lined with ermine, and other costly gifts, presented to them from the Duchess.

#### A COUNCIL OF STATE.

THE next morning, as Isambard was walking out with Lancelot, the latter informed him, that he was going to the camp of the allied princes, to carry the last proposal of peace from the Duchess. He then took leave of Isambard, and departed for the camp, accompanied by the sage Theobald ; and arriving at the tent of Gerold, they delivered their mission to that Prince. The Count listened to them with calmness, and replied, " that he should assemble a Council of the Princes, and there deliberate upon the Duchess's offers. But I believe," added Gerold, " they will be judged insincere. It is easily imagined, that so many va-

liant

lliant Knights as now compose the Court of Beatrice do not inspire her with pacific sentiments; their interests, perhaps, are opposite to ours; the pretensions of the King of Pannonia, for instance, are sufficiently known; and should Beatrice consult him, he would not advise her to such conditions as we should accept."—"Signor," replied Lancelot, "I am not acquainted with the projects of the King of Pannonia; but I know that the Princess consults only her reason and her duty. I know likewise, that the Knights, though fearless of war, are not desirous of it. In fine, Signor, I can assure you that you have many friends at the Court of Beatrice."

After Lancelot had retired, Gerold called an assembly of the Princes. He then read the proposals of the Duchess: she declared "her resolution to remain free; that violent measures would never induce her to make choice of a husband; but that she wished for peace, and offered to pay the expence of all the preparations for war."—Hartrad, Count of Thuringia, who had long entertained a pas-

sion for Beatrice, first spoke: He maintained, that peace, on such terms, could not be accepted without dishonour; and that the Allied Princes would become an object of ridicule in the eyes of all Europe: if, after the enterprise they had begun, they should ingloriously retreat without compelling the Duchess to choose one among them for a husband. Henry, Duke of Friuli, who also loved Beatrice, was of the same opinion: the Duke of Spoleto was almost the only person who appeared inclined to peace.—Gerold combatted his sentiments with great art and eloquence, and endeavoured to prove, that mere policy, independent of private interest, should make them reject the proposals offered. Giaffar, who was admitted a Member of the Council, then requested leave to speak:—After drawing a striking picture of the dreadful evils of war—“ When we reflect,” said he, “ on these terrible calamities, every passion ought to subside, and the voice of humanity suppress those of ambition, resentment, or even love. It is said, dishonour would attend the acceptance

ceptance of the proposed peace—when a Prince submits to humiliating conditions, when he concludes a treaty contrary to the interests and rights of his subjects, then it is that he makes a dishonourable peace ; but when nothing is required of him that can prove prejudicial to his nation, he commits a crime in continuing hostilities, and will alone be responsible for the blood that shall be shed. I will go further and observe, that should an enemy demand a just restitution, a Prince ought to make it, and thereby expiate the crime of usurpation, for such may all conquests be considered : but in the present case, there is no question of these great sacrifices ; the Duchess of Cleves, affording a noble example of moderation, demands peace of the aggressors, and offers them her treasures to spare the blood of her subjects. Should this be refused, with what ardour will they combat in her cause ? As for ourselves, can we depend upon the zeal of our troops ? What interest have they in the war ? They have no homes to defend, they are only to experience the fatigues and dangers of it ? And of what avail is the va-

lour and ability of the Chiefs when the soldiers are discontented? It is their enthusiasm which produces victory; and discouragement and dismay will prevail in our camp, while the energy of the besieged will multiply both their resources and successes. Consider, that upon your decision depends the fate of that multitude of men which compose the two armies. Our tents, extended along the foot of these hills, have already struck terror into the minds of the peaceful inhabitants of this fine country; with a single word, you may dispel all their fears. Ah! turn your eyes toward those fertile fields which surround you; look at those cottages, the abodes of innocence; behold that flourishing army; and think, that in rejecting peace you pronounce a sanguinary sentence, the prompt and terrible execution of which will every where carry devastation and death! Yes, I will ever maintain, that defensive war alone can be reasonable and just; and where peace can be either accepted or proposed, a declaration of war is the most horrid of crimes. Success even cannot diminish its atrocity in the eyes of reason and humanity, since true

glory

glory is inseparable from moderation and justice."

This speech gave rise to the most violent debates; and Hartrad, and the Duke of Friuli, who felt themselves particularly pointed at, expressed great resentment against Giaffar. Gerold thought proper to put an end to the dispute; and observed, that if liberty of opinion were not allowed, it was useless to summon a council. "In this respect," said he, "I may be permitted to offer myself as an example: Two of the dearest friends I have in this assembly, the Duke of Spolotto and Giaffar, differ from me in opinion, and I am not incensed against them. They have spoken conscientiously, and have done their duty: ours is now to reflect upon their advice. I therefore propose, that nothing be decided upon with precipitation; that the Duchess be informed, that we shall maturely examine her proposal before we reply to it; and that we desire the truce, which expires the day after to-morrow, should be prolonged another month. During this time, new ideas, and new negotiations, and the reinforcements we expect, may bring about a pacification."

pacification." This proposal was combated by Hartrad and the Duke of Friuli, but by every other member it was adopted. The Council immediately named two deputies to carry their decision to the Princess: Beatrice accepted the proposals, and consented to the prolongation of the truce.

#### A VIRTUOUS AND ENLIGHTENED PRINCESS.

The next morning at ten o'clock, the Duchess of Cleves gave notice to the Knights that she was going to the Plain. It was in the month of November, but the air was serene and mild, like one of the fine days of autumn.

Beatrice, attended by all the knights and ladies, arrived at the appointed place: she was dressed with remarkable simplicity and elegance, and never appeared to greater advantage. The whole plain was covered with people, who waited the appearance of their sovereign. The moment they saw her, the sky resounded with shouts of joy and acclamation. The Duchess requested the

splendid

splendid train which accompanied her to stop for a moment, when, leaving the circle, she advanced alone upon the plain, and mixed in the crowd that idolised her. Every one pressed forward to look at her, but, at the same time was fearful of incommodeing her; at length they made an opening, and she passed through the multitude to the tent, frequently stopping to speak to those who were near her, and beholding them all with looks expressive of tenderness and gratitude: when she approached the tent, she stopped, and turning toward the people, she observed that the fineness of the day rendered the tent useless; but that, having occasion to harrangue them, she wished to have the stage removed from it to the open air, in order to be heard by all present. This was instantly done, and the Knights being now arrived, all without distinction ranged themselves round the Princess. Theudon, however, with Isambard, and the youngest of the sons of Amion, found means to place themselves very near her. Oliver, who was at a greater distance, could not see her, but Beatrice had him called, observing to Isambard, that she wished him

him not to be separated from his friend. Oliver then came forward, and placed himself beside Isambard. A deep silence prevailed, and the Princess expressed herself in the following terms: "I have been two years sovereign of this country, and I may venture to flatter myself, that I have added to its prosperity and happiness; but of this I do not boast: young, and without experience, I can only claim the merit of blameless sentiments and upright intentions. I wanted knowledge; but I was sensible of my deficiency, and I sought after wise counsels, and my love for the public welfare has stood me in lieu of talents. To my respectable preceptor, to the sage Theobald, am I indebted for my principles, and my notions of real glory; and to him you owe the institutions and new laws which secure your liberty and happiness. He has taught me, that it is a noble task to govern a people who are sensible of their rights, who can estimate virtue, and dispense glory by their approbation and love. He taught me too, that one of the most important duties of a sovereign is, to avoid war, and to submit to the greatest sacrifices

for

or the preservation of peace. Judge then of the sorrow I now feel on account of the powerful league which is formed against me. The confederate Princes insist that I shall make choice of a husband among them; but the injustice and violence of their conduct sufficiently shew, that, were I to yield to their wishes, I should give you a tyrant to reign over you, and that sole consideration enough to induce me to persist in my refusal. Finding, therefore, that war is inevitable, I have been reflecting upon the evils it will bring upon you; and not being able to support that idea, I have taken, for some time past, the resolution I am now going to make known to you. Ambition, and the desire of reigning over this fine new country, have chiefly instigated the Princes to appear in arms against me. If Beatrice did not possess the Duchy of Cleves, there would be no contest to obtain her hand. My rank I only value as far as it is conducive to your welfare; and happy should I be to announce it to secure public tranquillity."

Here a thousand mournful cries interrupted Beatrice. "No, no," exclaimed the multitude

tude from every quarter ; “ we will live, and ~~wild~~  
if it be necessary, die for Beatrice.” The ~~wha~~  
troops of the Princess, who had mingled with ~~cast~~  
the crowd by her orders, unarmed, like the ~~For~~  
rest of the people, lifted up their helmets, ~~the~~  
and cried out—“ *We will deliver you from your persecutors—we promise you victory—we swear to keep our words.*” This universal ~~pea~~  
enthusiasm reached the hearts of the Knights, ~~exp~~  
who were spectators, and they united their ~~near~~  
voices to the acclamations of the people and ~~on:~~  
soldiers. Oliver had hitherto, according to ~~any~~  
custom, refrained from looking at the ~~desi~~  
Duchess ; but being deeply affected at her ~~you~~  
speech, and above all at the sound of her ~~not~~  
voice, he turned his face toward her, and ~~rank~~  
contemplated the triumph of goodness and ~~whic~~  
virtue. How graceful does glory appear ~~rend~~  
when attended by youth and beauty !—This ~~the~~  
was the first time that Oliver ventured to ~~or, t~~  
gaze on that enchanting countenance, which ~~my~~  
recalled to his mind so dear and mournful ~~of m~~  
remembrance : admiration held in suspense ~~et n~~  
every other sentiment ; but meeting a look ~~ition~~  
from Beatrice, he started ! and thought he ~~Char~~  
beheld Celanira ! The wretched Oliver, be- ~~of n~~  
wildered

, and wildered and overcome, cried, "O heavens !  
The what new kind of punishment ! " And he  
with cast down his eyes streaming with tears.  
e the Fortunately the tumult was too great, and  
mets, the agitation too universal to allow his par-  
from pular distress to be noticed. At length,  
—w Beatrice making a sign that she wished to  
versal speak, silence again prevailed. After having  
ghts, expressed her gratitude, she begged to be  
their heard without any interruption, and she went  
e and on :—" It was not my intention to declare  
g to any fixed or hasty resolution ; I was only  
the desirous of making a proposal, and offering  
her you my advice. You are free, and I am  
her not : Providence, in having placed me in the  
and rank I fill, has consigned me an employment  
and which I cannot quit without your concur-  
ppearance ; a rank, of which you would have  
This the right to deprive me of, if I became unjust  
l to or, tyrannical : thus am I yours—to you are  
which my days devoted, and you alone can dispose  
ful a of me ; but, before you reject my proposal,  
ence let me entreat you to give it due considera-  
ook tion. If you will accept my abdication,  
he Charlemagne, the most powerful and virtuous  
be of monarchs, will become your sovereign ;  
ered or,

or, if you prefer a republican government, he will be your protector and ally—the choice will belong to yourselves: for my own part, I believe with the sage Theobald, that a perfect government cannot exist, because it is impossible to fix the inclinations of men, or to limit their wishes. However, do not imagine that personal alarms, or any selfish motives, have induced me to renounce the noble occupation of governing you: my glory is to render you happy:—your love, your courage, and the valour and talents of these generous Knights, who are come to my succour, are certain pledges of victory. But, what tears will that triumph cost me! Can victory console me for the lives that must be lost? Ah! suffer me to give up a pre-eminence which exposes you to such dangers. I will not abandon a country which is so dear to me; I will continue to live among you in willing obscurity; and, when I see you peaceable and happy, I shall have made no sacrifice—I shall have given up nothing.” Here the Duchess left off speaking, and put both her hands up to her face.—“*May Beatrice be always our sovereign!*”

reign!" cried the people with transport. This general acclamation was a thousand times repeated with the liveliest enthusiasm. The people then entreated the princess to promise them to forego her intentions. Beatrice then lifted up her hands, and made the assurances they required, and the applause were redoubled. After this, the people cut down large branches of trees, of which they formed a litter; and prevailing on the Princess to seat herself thereon, they bore her in triumph to her palace. All the Knights, those even who were not enamoured with Beatrice, were seized with this irresistible emotion; and when they were returned that to the palace, Lancelot, who was in a corner up of the saloon by the side of Oliver, spoke to such him in rapture of the scene which had just passed before their eyes.—“I must confess to you,” said he, “the fascinating glory with which we saw Beatrice surrounded renders her still more interesting: before this I was sufficiently convinced of her merit, yet we feel the value of virtue with greater force, after having enjoyed the happiness of seeing it

it crowned." At these words Oliver sighed, and after a moment's silence, "Yes," said he, "the spectacle to which we have been the witness, cannot but leave a deep impression upon our minds." On saying this, he arose in an absent manner, drew nearer to the Duchess, changed his place, and, at length, went out of the room.

This day, which was so glorious for the Duchess of Cleves, increased both the love and admiration of Isambard. He observed with a secret delight, that the Princess treated his two rivals, Theudon and the youthful Guichard, with studied politeness; whilst his behaviour to the other Knights, and particularly to himself, was less reserved, and full of courtesy. Already he began to discover that he had incurred the hatred of the king of Pannonia, which aversion he attributed to jealousy; and thus the heart of Isambard gradually encouraged the most endearing hopes.—Beatrice was seated between Amalberga and Delia; Isambard, Lancelot, Angelbert, and some other Knights, formed a half-circle opposite these three persons. Angelberga, o

ghed Angelbert had just been reading a copy of  
said verses, which he had composed for Beatrice ;  
been then, on a sudden that Princess falling into  
deep reverie, took no further part in the  
arose conversation. In a few minutes, however,  
the he resumed her discourse, and changing the  
subject, spoke of the Court of France, and

asked Isambard many questions relative to  
the. She then inquired if he really observed  
a striking resemblance between her and  
the unfortunate daughter of Witikind, which  
French Knights, and Oger, the Dane,  
reported. These questions, though very  
natural, surprised Isambard, and gave him  
uneasiness for which he was at a loss to  
account: he replied, that the likeness was  
indeed extraordinary. Upon this, Beatrice  
asked a number of questions respecting the  
of Celanira, and entered into several  
particulars concerning her. At this moment  
Oliver entered the room, and Beatrice im-  
mediately changed the subject. Oliver, as  
usual, placed himself in a remote corner of  
the room: he seldom came near the Duchess,  
and never addressed his conversation to her:  
on her part, spoke but little to him, and  
seemed

seemed to lament and respect his deep melancholy.

The conversation now became general ; when the sound of a horn announced the arrival of a new knight, and in a few minutes after appeared the valiant Astolpus, the renowned English paladin\*, with whose reputation all the knights were acquainted, and whom Oliver had frequently met in his travels. After the first compliments were over, Astolpus informed the Duchess, that having heard of the unjust enterprise of the confederate Princes against her, he was come to offer himself as one of her defenders. He then placed himself by the side of Oliver, and requested he would favour him with a private interview.

#### THE CONFIDENCES.

THE next day Oliver retired to his chamber with the English knight, who told him

\* This Astolpus is a real personage of the time, much renown in old chronicles and romances, and is the hero of some modern poems.

in confidence, that the principal motive of his journey was to solicit the hand of Beatrice for the king of England. "That prince," added he, "passed through this country when in exile, and unknown, and saw the Duchess at a public festival. She was then all but fifteen years of age: but she made a profound impression upon the heart of Egbert; and he now lays at her feet the throne he has gained by his valour and his virtues." After mentioning these particulars, Astolphus added, he wished to obtain a private audience with Beatrice, to deliver his mission. Oliver then informed him that the Princess never granted any upon political affairs since the persecutions she had suffered; that having the different humours and pretensions of her defenders to manage, she carefully shunned every thing which might inspire them with suspicion, or give them umbrage; and that every kind of negotiation was transacted in public. This information greatly embarrassed Astolphus, who was unwilling to be exposed to a public refusal. After some reflection, he entreated Oliver to sound the inclinations of the Princess, and to speak of

the personal qualities of Egbert, whom he had known. Oliver positively refused being the bearer of this commission ; but, at the repeated instances of Astolpus, he at length agreed to speak to Isambard on the subject. Oliver was led by two motives to make this refusal : the embarrassment of conversing alone with Beatrice, and likewise the scruple of making her a proposal the success of which would afflict Isambard. The latter, it is true, had of late left off speaking to him of his passion for Beatrice. Oliver easily discerned, that the likeness of that Princess to Celanira checked his confidence on that subject, and created an embarrassment which his reason could not overcome ; but, sensible that Isambard really adored the Princess, and fancying he had perceived an inclination on her part for him, he thought it his duty to inform him of this new event, and he immediately repaired to his apartment. Isambard listened to him with much emotion, and, after having thanked him, said, “ Well, my friend, if there exists a man on earth worthy of Beatrice, it is doubtless this Prince : and the proposal must be communicated to her,

as Astolpus desires."—"Then," returned Oliver, "thou wilt charge thyself with it."—"No," replied Isambard; "I must confess I should do it with an ill grace, and betray my own feelings: but I entreat thee to be the bearer of this intelligence, to request a private interview for that purpose, and to urge, in favour of Egbert, all that truth and justice can dictate."

When the company sat down to dinner, Oliver approached the Duchess, and was so near to her, that she asked him, for the first time, to sit down by her. Oliver spoke but little, scarcely partook of the repast, and, during the whole time of dinner, had not sufficient resolution to make the request he intended. Every time he determined upon it, his emotion was such, that the words expired upon his lips. At last, upon rising from table, Beatrice turning toward him, he cast his eyes on the ground, and with difficulty uttered, "Madam, may I venture to ask you to grant me a moment's audience in private?" Beatrice made a movement of surprise, but immediately replied, "Yes, this evening at six, in my closet."

The company returned to the drawing-room, where Beatrice appeared thoughtful, and wholly lost in reflection. Oliver returned to Isambard's chamber, to wait the appointed hour of rendezvous: some minutes before six he repaired to the Princess's apartment. As he went through the suite of rooms which led to the cabinet, a recollection at once painful and delicious was revived to his imagination: the hour, the disposition of the rooms, the agitation of his mind, all recalled his first private interview with Celanira in the palace of Charlemagne. The idea, that the personal resemblance and the like sound of voice of Beatrice were about to increase the illusion, completed his distress. At length, he arrived at the door of the cabinet: it was half opened: he stopped—when a voice, which reached his heart, called to him and bade him come in. This was the first time the Princess, in speaking to him, had called him by his name; and the manner in which she pronounced the words, “*Come, Oliver,*” had something to him so inexpressible in it, that his eyes overflowed with tears. Beatrice, on perceiving him, rose

from

from her seat, and, casting her eyes upon him, was so struck with the expression of his countenance, that she remained some minutes without sitting down. At last she resumed her seat; and pointing to a chair which was beside her, Oliver sat down, but did not utter a word. The Duchess was placed in such a light as obscured part of her countenance, and disguised the colour of her hair and eyes; the form of her face was sufficiently visible, and she was dressed in white.—Oliver recollect~~ed~~ this was Celanira's usual dress, and never before did the resemblance appear to him so perfect. His embarrassment and emotion were equally distressing. What would the Duchess think of his silence and his looks? Yet was he unable to speak: an insurmountable oppression of mind deprived him of all power of utterance; and, beside, he could not well recollect what he had to impart—his perplexity was not to be expressed. After some minutes passed in this manner, Beatrice broke silence: “Well, Oliver,” said she, “what have you to say to me?”—“Ah, Madam!” returned the

wretched Knight:—he could not proceed, but burst into tears, and, covering his face with his hands, was going to retire. The Duchess held him, saying in broken accents, “Stay; you must stay.” Oliver, more affected than ever, remained motionless: a sensation he could not define now suspended and dissipated his embarrassment. He looked at the Duchess, and, for the first time, found her as beautiful and interesting as Celanira herself; she was weeping.—“O Heavens!” cried he: he dared not say more; but, all painful recollection being for a moment removed, he saw only her, and contemplated her with delight. “Hear me, Oliver,” returned the Duchess; “I am going, I believe, to spare you an embarrassing confession: I know your secret; I know that a striking resemblance calls to your memory a most afflicting scene—I pity you from the bottom of my heart—I regret this likeness which afflicts you; but, in the name of Heaven! let not the illusion deprive me of such a champion; and if you are come to take your leave”—“Leave, Madam! what, I?”

I?" interrupted Oliver with vehemence: " I quit you while my arm can serve you? Ah! to shed my blood in your defence; to die for you, henceforth will be the only glory of which I can be ambitious!"—" You dispel my fears," replied the Duchess; " I had imagined you intended to leave me." Oliver sighed, and made no reply. After a moment's silence, " I will tell you," said Beatrice, " how I was acquainted with your sentiments. Long before your arrival here, Angelbert and Lancelot had spoken to me of this resemblance, which causes you so much pain; and they had related the tragical end of the unfortunate Celanira, and in what manner you exposed your life to save hers." Here Oliver shuddered: these words destroyed the enchantment which had been affording him a momentary reprieve. The Duchess resuming her discourse, " This sad story," continued she, " deeply interested me; and being told before your arrival here, that you were plunged into the most profound melancholy, and that a black crape covered your shield, I no longer doubted of your sentiments for the unfortunate Celanira;

ra; and never shall I forget the expression of your countenance at the first moment of surprise and emotion, upon seeing me: I was more affected by it than I am able to describe." Here the Duchess left off speaking, and the tears of Oliver began to flow afresh. "I will not deny, Madam," returned he, "what you have discovered: it is true, I adore her—and shall carry with me to the grave this fatal passion!—Ah! can any thing short of eternal regret be felt for one who so perfectly resembled you?"—  
The Duchess made no reply, and a long silence ensued. At last, Beatrice starting from her reverie said, "I only entered into this explanation to remove the embarrassment always occasion you: I am but too well aware, that nothing can console you; but I was desirous to rid you at least from the constraint I occasioned: I thought too, that the illusion of this resemblance would be less distressing to you, when you had no longer any apprehensions of exciting my astonishment by inexplicable behaviour. As to your secret, I need not tell you, that you may depend upon my discretion; nor shall I ever

renew

renew the painful subject—and my heart, from the concern it takes in your sorrow, is, I trust, worthy of the confidence. Now, Oliver, inform me of the occasion of your visit.” Oliver was so much agitated, that he was obliged to collect himself for some minutes, in order to be able to make a reply. At length, he entered into the particulars of his commission, and spoke highly in praise of Egbert. The Duchess heard him without interrupting him; and when he had left off speaking, she said, “ And what would you advise me to do ?”—“ I think with Isambard, that if there exists in the universe a man who may reasonably have pretensions to the hand of the Duchess of Cleves, it is the King of England.” — “ But is not having pretensions to my hand, likewise having pretensions to my heart?” — “ Reason, policy, and glory, Madam, are the usual motives of an alliance with persons of your rank.” — “ You place me, then, in the class of all other Princesses? — Well,” continued the Princess, “ I must tell you, Oliver, that, if I form the engagement you propose, I shall

consult my heart : for the interest of my subjects I could, indeed, quit the spot which gave me birth ; but ambition will never induce me to abandon my country. You may communicate this answer to the English Knight." At these words Oliver rose, made a low bow, and withdrew. Full of perplexity and agitation, he wished not to reflect upon this interview with Beatrice, nor to enter into an examination of his own sentiments ; he only resolved to shun, with the greatest care, every opportunity of seeing her in private. He then announced to Isambard and the English Knight the refusal of the Duchess, which being of so positive a nature tended still further to encourage the hopes of his friend.

## THE WAR.

THE truce drew near its conclusion, and the Duchess of Cleves, having lost all hopes of obtaining a peace, yielded herself up a prey to sorrow. She had given Delia a villa situated in the midst of the forest, whither

she

she often retired, accompanied by Amalberga, to indulge her love of solitude : and thither Beatrice now repaired, oppressed with anxiety and grief, and shut herself up with these two friends during the last three days of the truce.

In the mean time the allied Princes assembled in council for the last time, when war was decided upon : and it was agreed to send Beatrice a formal declaration of hostilities. The Allies had no uneasiness relative to the success of this war ; their superiority in number, the ability of their generals, the excellent discipline of their troops, all promised the most brilliant success. The Prince of Greece, too, was now arrived with a reinforcement to join the confederate chiefs.

All the subjects of the Duchess had flown to arms ; and the wish of defending her had inspired such enthusiasm, that old men enlisted with all the ardour which distinguished youth. This was known in the camp ; but the allies affected to despise soldiers without experience, and each chief indulged the flattering hopes which love and ambition could prompt. The Duchess had just published a

manifesto, which crowned the admiration she had acquired. In this proclamation, Beatrice gave an account of every effort she had tried to obtain peace. In entering into the detail of her conduct, and that of her allies, she shewed in the clearest manner the injustice and the violence of their proceeding: but she contented herself with stating facts; and, far from making any reflections, or using any injurious expressions, she spoke of her persecutors in terms of esteem. She knew that the language of moderation is always the most persuasive, and alone consistent with true dignity.

On the day which preceded the expiration of the truce, Beatrice returned to the castle. In the evening that Princess, together with the Ladies of her Court, and the Knights clad in armour, assembled in a spacious gallery. There all the Knights renewed the oath to combat for the Duchess, and not to leave her before she was delivered from her oppressors. The Duchess and the Ladies then fastened to the shields and lances of the Knights various ornaments taken from their dress: one gave a knot of ribbands, or piece

of

of a scarf; another a necklace or a chain; some presented the golden clasps which fastened their vestments. The Duchess, who first began to make the presents, conferred a magnificent one on each Knight; but, when she came near Oliver, stopping short, addressed him with a look of tenderness: "The black crape," said she, "which covers your buckler seems to announce your aversion to its being ornamented, and we ought to respect your inclination; but I cannot give up my right, or the satisfaction of offering you some pledge of my esteem and gratitude: and I flatter myself, you will do me the favour to accept a courser\*, which will be presented to you to-morrow." At these words, Oliver bowed respectfully; and the Princess advancing towards Isambard, who was near his friend, took from her wrists two superb bracelets set with emeralds and opals, and presented them to him. It was remarked, that this gift was the most valuable she had conferred; and jealousy observed

\* A horse of parade was called a Palfrey; and a battle-horse a Courser.

with

with not less displeasure, that the hands of Beatrice trembled to such a degree, as to render her unable to fasten them to Isambard's shield.

Another ceremony of Chivalry succeeded to this: Angelbert and Lancelot declared, they would for ever unite themselves together in the sacred alliance of brothers in arms. They held each other by the hand, and Angelbert first speaking took the following oath: "In the name of all which Religion, Honour and Virtue hold most sacred, I engage myself for ever to unite my fortune and glory with thine; always to partake thy toils and dangers; to second thee in all thy enterprises; to leave every thing, to defend or deliver thee. I promise never to flatter thy passions; to speak always the truth, at the risk even of incurring thy displeasure; and, if thou shouldest go astray, to excuse thee, to lament thy errors, and to use every means of giving thee consolation. Henceforward thy friends and thy enemies shall be mine; and the benefit or injustice which thou shalt experience shall inspire me too with resentment or gratitude."

Lance.

Lancelot repeated this oath in the same words : the two friends then embraced, and made an exchange of arms, which closed the ceremony. The company then returned to the saloon, when the venerable Theobald, attended by his fair daughter Sylvia, appeared. The old man, having no farther hopes of serving the Duchess by his negotiations with the Princes, came to partake her danger, and to shut himself up in the castle with his sovereign.

The next morning one of the Duchess's squires waited upon Oliver, to request he would go down to the court which was under his windows ; and there the Knight of the Swan was presented with a most beautiful steed, together with a pair of gold spurs, and a housing embroidered with pearls and precious stones. The magnificence of the present was not that which most struck Oliver ; he cast his eyes upon two rows of large pearls which bordered the top of the housing, and which, in an instant, he recollect ed to have seen round the Duchess's neck, and for which she had professed a great regard, being the gift of her father. While he was considering

sidering these pearls with not a little emotion, the 'squire said to him, " You may boast, Signor, of possessing the finest horse in the world. Having been commissioned by the Princess six months ago to purchase the best horse I could find, I met with this by chance as he was being led to the camp for the Count of Bavaria. The Princess offered so large a sum for the steed, that she obtained the preference; and though we were assured he was completely trained, she every morning at sun-rise caused him to be exercised in her presence." This detail did not contribute to restore the tranquillity of Oliver's agitated mind: he stood motionless, with his eyes still fixed upon the necklace, and kept a profound silence. The 'squire retired much disgusted, and told the Duchess in a peevish manner, that the Knight of the Swan, disdaining the most complete courser in Europe, had only taken notice of the housing. But this account had an effect far different from what the 'squire imagined it would produce. It was now incumbent on Oliver to return thanks to Beatrice: and after much reflection, he had prepared a speech, which

he

he thought suitable to the occasion ; but when he came to address her, he could not proceed, for he had forgotten what he intended to say. Beatrice blushed : each looked at the other without uttering a word : Oliver, starting, raised his eyes to heaven, and hastily retired. He returned shortly after, and found the Duchess surrounded by several persons.

The rest of the evening passed away in a gloomy manner ; all the Ladies, especially the Duchesses, were oppressed with the deepest melancholy. It was known through a deserter from the camp, that the Allies intended to make an assault the next morning. The assault was made, but without success : the besieged then made a sally, and engaged in a long and bloody battle—the King of Pannonia received several wounds, and all the champions of Beatrice combated with heroic ardour ; but the Knights of the Swan even surpassed themselves, and performed such prodigies of valour, that this combat alone would have been sufficient to immortalize them. The youthful Zemni, too, animated by his master's example, distinguished himself

himself in a singular manner. The vindictive Adalgise passed the ranks several times in hopes of meeting Isambard; and, mistaking Oliver for his friend, he began to attack him. The Knight of the Swan overthrew him with a single stroke of his lance, and, on the point of being taken prisoner, he was rescued by his suite. Oliver, however, seized his courser, and gave him in charge to one of his 'quires. The Greek soldiers, repulsed by Isambard, began to fall back with great confusion, and were pursued by him. But at this moment the Prince of Greece came up with a corps de reserve; the routed troops returned to their ranks; and Isambard, notwithstanding his signal valour, was on the point of being surrounded, when Oliver, attended by Zemni and two 'quires only, flew to his relief with such impetuosity, that the enemy's ranks again gave way, and relapsed into their former confusion. Adalgise made his escape; but Oliver falling upon Prince Constantine made him his prisoner.

While these transactions were going forward in the centre of the army, the four sons

of

of Duke Aimon, with Angelbert and Lancelot, obtained a similar success in the left wing: Oger, Archambald, Astolhus, and young Roger, commanded the right with equal advantage and glory. Oger, having received a slight wound only, resolved not to leave the field of battle; and, impelled by his ardour, though weakened from the loss of blood, he advanced with much temerity to the front ranks of the enemy, and the gigantic Bruhier attacked him, and made him his prisoner. In the mean while Gerold and the other chiefs, observing the day to be lost, caused a retreat to be sounded, which was made with an ardour and ability worthy of the courage which had been displayed during the combat.

Night approaching, the conquerors collected their scattered troops, and entered the castle in triumph. The Duchess, pale and trembling, supported by her attendants, came to meet them at the foot of the great staircase. Oliver presented to her the Prince of Greece his prisoner; Isambard, Guichard, and many others, laid at her feet the standard and colours taken from the enemy. Beatrice

trice was too much agitated and affected to thank her defenders in any other manner than by her expressive countenance. All the Court repaired to the great gallery, where as many of the soldiers were admitted as it could contain, and the rest remained in the outer rooms. There, according to the military customs in the Ages of Chivalry, the heralds at arms were to award the prize of valour to the warrior, who had most distinguished himself in battle. Already were the heralds advancing towards Oliver, when the Soldiers and Knights all cried out with one voice, that Oliver deserved the prize. The Duchess then came up to him; and Oliver bending one knee before her, received a branch of laurel, and a beautiful ruby which she took from her finger. She then held forth her hand, which the conqueror was entitled to kiss: at the same instant, a concert of music celebrated the triumph of the Knight of the Swan in warlike strains. His generous rivals all pressed to embrace him: the soldiers applauded his glory with shouts of joy, and the name of Oliver resounded throughout the palace.

Oliver

Oliver was deeply affected ; he was astonished to find himself again alive to glory, and, no longer recognising his own heart, feared more than ever to interrogate it. The company sat down to table, and Beatrice placed Oliver and the Prince of Greece on each side of her. The latter she treated with a generosity which was natural to her, and which the manners of the times prescribed. To respect a vanquished enemy ; to mitigate the sense of his misfortune by marks of esteem and the most delicate attentions ; to combat with intrepidity, and triumph with modesty, were considered by ancient warriors as sacred and indispensable obligations. During the repast, Oliver for the first time spoke to Beatrice without being previously addressed by her. He asked her, whether the success of the day had not entirely dissipated her alarms. “ Ah ! ” replied she, “ this day has proved the most brilliant of my whole life ; but had you felt what I suffered during the battle ! ” These few words were expressive, but her voice and looks were still more so. Oliver cast down his eyes, which were wet with

with tears. The Duchess then changed the conversation, and spoke on various subjects.

Theobald was then commisioned by the Duchess to go the next morning to the camp, to proffer the Prince of Greece in exchange for Oger. Oliver, before he returned to his chamber, ordered his 'squire to lead the fine horse he had taken from Adalgise to Roger's pavilion. Roger accepted the present with gratitude uninixed with embarrassment; for, in those times, the most wealthy Knights bestowed gifts without ostentation upon the poorest, who received the favour without humiliation. That false delicacy so distressing to friendship, so troublesome to generous minds, and which pride and avarice have since made a virtue, was then utterly unknown.

Let us for a moment leave the brilliant Court of Beatrice, to see what was passing in the enemy's camp. Bruhier being the subject of the Count of Bavaria, his first care after the retreat was to conduct his illustrious prisoner into Gerold's tent. This Prince expressed

expressed the most flattering esteem for Oger: "We owe," said he, "the honour of receiving the valiant Oger in our camp, solely to the rashness of his courage; and if we detain him, it may be thought we are fearful of renewing the combat, which our broken arms did not allow us to continue: You are therefore at liberty, Signor, and to-morrow at break of day the heralds at arms shall conduct you back to the castle of Cleves."

Oger, much delighted at the courteous behaviour of Gerold, retired to taste the sweets of repose, of which he stood so much in need. The next day at sun-rise the Knight arose, and waited upon the Count to take leave. Gerold, after lavishing upon the Danish Knight every mark of distinction and friendship, accompanied him out of the camp, and commissioned him to demand of the Duchess a cessation of arms, for the purpose of paying the last honours to those who had fallen in battle. At a little distance from the castle, Oger met the venerable Theobald, who was going to the camp to propose the exchange of Prince Constantine and

Oger.

Oger. Greatly astonished to see the latter, Theobald asked him how he had obtained his liberty ? when he heard with great pleasure of the noble proceedings of Gerold. Beatrice, after having heard the relation of Oger, did not wish to be surpassed in generosity, and the Prince of Greece was informed that he was no longer a prisoner. The Prince came to return her thanks; when she announced to him the suspension of arms, and pressed him to remain a few days at her Court. Constantine, already filled with admiration of the Duchess, accepted the invitation with pleasure ; and in cultivating further acquaintance with her, he became completely disgusted with the unjust cause in which he had taken arms.

#### A VAIN RESOLUTION.

IN the mean while, Oliver, more agitated than ever, was unable to chase away his reflections, or forget his feelings, upon receiving from the Duchess the prize of valour. He still, however, flattered himself, that in Beatrice he only adored the image of Cela-

nira, and considered this new passion as a further proof of eternal constancy. But he could not now deceive himself respecting the sentiments of Beatrice, and, being assured of her affection, shuddered at thinking he was the rival of Isambard. This distressing idea awakened new remorse in his soul, and made him resolve, with more than usual care, not only to avoid private interviews with Beatrice, but every thing which might promote any intercourse at all with her: but on this very day, as he was going along a gallery of the palace, he met her alone. Oliver, on perceiving the Duchess, was going to retire. She called to him, and, quickening her pace, "I am happy to meet you," said she, "I want to obtain your consent to something I have much at heart." Oliver requested to hear her command.—"I have remarked," replied she, "how fond you are of Zemni, and how greatly he is attached to you likewise. I am informed too, that in the late victory gained over our enemies he displayed the most brilliant courage; and I now wish to confer upon him the honour of knighthood. Does this

obtain your consent?"—Oliver, much affected, only sighed and bowed.—"Well," said the Duchess, "let Zemni know, that the day after to-morrow he shall be received into the order of Chivalry." On saying this, Beatrice, without waiting for a reply, left the Knight of the Swan, and returned to her apartment. Oliver went in search of Zemni, to inform him of the kindness of the Duchess. Zemni, being transported with delight, in the effusions of his gratitude entered into the most sincere eulogium of the Duchess's goodness. This was the first time he had indulged the pleasure of praising her to his master, as the striking resemblance of Beatrice to Celanira had always prevented him from speaking of her. Oliver listened with so much satisfaction to his discourse, that it engrossed all his attention till supper. Before the Knights retired, Lancelot, taking Oliver apart, requested him to take charge of a letter for Delia, and to speak to her in his behalf. In consequence of this, the next day at ten o'clock Oliver went to Delia's apartment to execute his commission. Coming to the door, he was going to knock; but the

moment

moment he put his hand to it it opened, and he entered. Not finding any one either in the anti-chamber or the drawing-room, he cast his eye toward a closet, the door of which being open, he advanced ; but no sooner had he put his foot within this closet, than he gave a loud cry, and remained motionless, almost entirely deprived of his faculties. The sight he beheld was indeed sufficient to produce such an effect upon him.

## A DANGEROUS ILLUSION.

LET it be imagined, if possible, what must have been the feelings of Oliver, when, instead of her he was seeking for, he thought he beheld no other than Celanira herself, just as she appeared to him the first time of seeing her at the Court of Charlemagne, dressed in the mode of her own country ! He beheld her in the very attitude, standing up, with her back turned to him : her shape, her head-dress, her long tresses of light hair, her clothes of the same form and colour ;

in a word, he found her in every respect so resembling, that, in the first moments of his astonishment, the idea of Beatrice never once entered his mind. At the cry uttered by Oliver, she turned about, grew pale, and, overcome with surprise, supported herself against a table, and looked at him without the power of speaking. Oliver seeing her face, and observing the paleness of it, still imagined Celanira was before him. At length the Duchess breaking silence, "Oliver," said she, "chance has discovered a mystery to you, of which you yourself were the object. Knowing how much you regretted not having the picture of her you loved, I wanted to furnish you with it, and that the resemblance which renders my sight so painful to you might for once procure you some consolation. To Delia alone I communicated my intentions, and in her apartment I have dedicated all my leisure moments during this last fortnight. My own person has served me for a model; but, embellished by art, this portrait, which I have just completed, will remind you of nothing more

more of Beatrice than her tender friendship, while it presents to your eyes the loved features of Celanira." Saying this, the Duchess presented the picture to the Knight of the Swan. Oliver, falling at her feet, exclaimed, "Ah! let me prostrate myself before her true image!" Beatrice could only answer with her tears. Oliver seized her hands, and, pressing them to his heart— "Yes," continued he, "it is she! I see her again! that look is hers! O thou dear object of my adoration, tell me, if by a new prodigy thou art come to make amends for my long sufferings?" At these words the Duchess, in great terror, breaking from him, "Oliver," said she, "recognise the sad Beatrice, and put an end to this dangerous illusion."—"Well, then," interrupted Oliver, "relieve me from this load of life." On saying this, he threw himself upon a sofa, covering his face with his hands.— Beatrice, pale and trembling, remained some time standing by him, without venturing to speak.—"Ah! Madam," returned Oliver in a voice interrupted by his sobs, "what have you been doing? It is not a resemblance

only you have been restoring to me—you have taken Celanira from the tomb—I saw her eyes fix themselves upon me—I felt her tears fall upon my face! It was her trembling hand which I pressed to my bosom! Oh! cruel Beatrice, you have only re-animated my existence, to restore to me all my former anguish!”—“O heavens!” interrupted the Duchess, shedding a flood of tears, “what killing reproaches are these! Must I then endeavour to justify myself? Oliver, can it be possible that you have not yet read my heart?” At this question Oliver started; he joined his hands, and, turning toward the Duchess in a supplicating attitude, and with the most genuine expressions of grief and tenderness: “O deign,” said he, “to bewail a lamentable error; it is at your feet I must implore forgiveness. But, can I find myself again there without relapsing into my former error?”—“Is it Oliver,” replied Beatrice, “who calls upon me to bewail him? Can he be ignorant of the dangerous compassion with which he has been able to inspire me? When his sorrows pass into my soul; when I partake

take of all he feels, can he still feign to misunderstand me?" At these words, Oliver, quite beside himself, fixed his eyes on Beatrice—"O heavens!" cried he, "and is this still an illusion?"—"No," replied the Duchess; "this heart, which has hitherto been so insensible, is wholly yours. May I hope, Oliver, that the tenderness and the hand of Beatrice will one day afford you consolation?" On uttering these words, she held out her hand. Oliver trembled, and the Duchess observed with terror his brow darken, his countenance alter, and assume the look of despair. He took hold of her hand, and, pressing it between his own, kept silence a moment; then looking at the Duchess with a gloomy and disastrous countenance, "This hand," said he, "this pure and beneficent hand, cannot be united with that of a murderer. Celanira was my wife, her virtue was equal to her charms; I was her assassin, I it was who killed her!" At this terrible declaration, the Duchess sunk down by Oliver; and no longer seeing or hearing the unhappy Knight, a deep swoon suspended for a while the sorrow which had

torn her heart.—“Now,” said Oliver, “she is acquainted with my crime, and she can think only with horror of me; I have destroyed her tenderness, and lost her esteem. Celanira! Isambard! O eternal and sacred remembrances, sustain my resolution!” The Duchess soon recovered her senses. The first word she uttered was the name of Oliver, and her looks sufficiently indicated that her heart still remained unchanged. “Unfortunate Oliver!” she cried, “the sentiments of Beatrice shall justify your generous confidence. Ah! never let us speak of this heart-rending and terrible secret: I am certain some dreadful error was the cause of that fatal event, and the excess of your grief tends but to increase my esteem and attachment.” These words excited the warmest sense of gratitude in the breast of the Knight; but, too deeply affected to make a reply, he lifted up his eyes to heaven, in a manner which better expressed what he felt than words could have done. The Duchess then made a sign to him to sit down by her: “We must now quickly separate,” said she; “but before I leave you,

Oliver,

Oliver, I will lay open my soul to you. My character has been ill understood; delicacy, and not pride, has hitherto preserved me from love. In rejecting the vows of so many Princes, I disdained only the pretensions of ambition and vanity, and I wanted a heart that was responsive to my own. Such was my situation, when Oger the Dane arrived here; he spoke to me of you. The powerful effect of compassion, the brilliancy of your reputation, the conformity of tastes and opinions, have since all concurred to promote my attachment to you. I thought too, you might have felt some attachment to one who recalled to your mind the dear object of your regret! But I am now too well convinced that I must give up all hopes of consoling you; and I shall be able to overcome an affection which you cannot return: it will at least for ever secure me from being the slave of another. I am nevertheless in want of a friend and protector. Oliver, can you refuse, upon such conditions, to remain with me?"

" Ah!" replied Oliver, " could I be

capable of forming a design of leaving you, as long as my services and my sword could be useful to you!"—"They will ever be so," returned Beatrice: "consider my situation and youth. Should a glorious peace put an end to this unjust war, I shall find myself alone, and surrounded by ambitious neighbours more than ever incensed against me; they will be desirous of avenging themselves of my triumph and refusal; war will be kindled afresh, and I shall at length be the victim of it. But, with the support of Oliver, I should have nothing to apprehend; and of that support I can only assure myself by making him reign over the dominions subject to my sway. Could I make him my sovereign, or adopt him for my brother, I should not persist in offering him my hand. But the united interests of my reputation, my glory and safety, prevent any other means of living with him as a sister; and it is only at the foot of the altar that I can declare Oliver my protector, and that of the state."

At these words Oliver fell at the feet of Beatrice. "Sublime and generous woman,"

cried

cried he, "what are you proposing? No; the unfortunate, the guilty Oliver can never be honoured with the august name of your husband! Ah! would you indeed become my sister? Isambard, the most virtuous, the most amiable of men, dares to adore you in secret, and he is my brother."—"No more," interrupted the Duchess, rising from her seat: "let us forget this sad interview; be assured I shall never recal the remembrance of it to you; but, I likewise expect that you will never mention to me the name of Isambard." On finishing these words, the Duchess, without looking at Oliver, moved to the other side of the cabinet, and, opening the door, disappeared in an instant. Oliver continued some time in the greatest distress and consternation; he surveyed with a stupefied air the place which Beatrice had just quitted. At last, calling forth all his resolution, he advanced some steps toward the door: he then recollect ed the picture which was left upon the table—with a trembling hand he grasped it, and hastily left the closet.

## THE DREAM.

OLIVER, unable to appear in public, passed the whole day in his chamber. The absence of Isambard, who had been dispatched with a commission by the Duchess, gave him full opportunity of indulging his grief, and of giving way to all his melancholy reflections. A thousand violent and contrary sensations took place in his mind, when he ventured to contemplate the picture received from Beatrice. It was indeed the most striking likeness of Celanira. The Duchess, in portraying her person, had been chiefly solicitous to catch the expression of it. The questions she had so frequently asked respecting her unfortunate rival, had enabled her to make every alteration necessary to render the likeness more exact. In examining this portrait, Oliver could at the same time retrace the person of Celanira and Beatrice. That angelic face recalled to his mind the form and the sentiments both of the one and the other. If he thought on the virtues of Celanira, he could only compare them

them with those of Beatrice: if he dwelt upon the affection of the former, and of the sacrifices she had made for him, the thought naturally reminded him of Beatrice. He saw, he heard that charming Princess make avowal of the purest and most tender affection for him; and, in spite of the prejudices of pride and birth, offer him, with equal delicacy and generosity, that hand which so many Princes solicited, and which she had refused to one of the greatest Kings in Europe. In fine, he could not look at the portrait without considering it a work of ingenious tenderness of the Duchess; and thus were Celanira and Beatrice, from this instant, so united in his imagination, that it was no longer possible to separate them, and they both formed but one idea. Notwithstanding the various conflicts which tore the heart of Oliver, and his sorrow on reflecting upon the severity of Beatrice's late farewell, he felt great comfort in the consideration of having done his duty, and that in this dangerous interview he had neither betrayed friendship, nor the fidelity he owed

owed to the memory of his unfortunate wife.

In the evening he admitted Zemni into his chamber, and this was only to converse with him about the Duchess: from him he learnt that she had complained of a violent head-ach, and that she appeared much oppressed. This account gave Oliver so much pain, that he dismissed his page, under the apprehension of being unable to dissemble his feelings upon the occasion. When he was alone, his tears began to flow afresh. At his accustomed hour he retired to rest; but, on lying down to repose, he did not find himself seized with those terrors which were usual to him on the approach of night. He lamented his destiny more than ever; but the sacrifices he had been making calmed the secret reproaches of his conscience, and he experienced that remorse alone inflicts insupportable anguish. Scarcely was he in bed, but it seemed as if an invisible hand had poured a salutary balm into his wounded heart; the calm of his mind called forth new sensations; his soul, disengaged for a short interval from all human passions, soared to

heaven:

heaven : *Religion* brought her consolation, and displayed her sublime hopes, and he was soon in the arms of sleep. For the first time since his misfortunes, his slumbers were now attended by happy dreams. He fancied himself transported into a beautiful garden, at the moment in which Aurora shed her earliest beams of light. He was at the foot of a tree, upon the branches of which were hung the fair tresses of his adored Celanira as received from her, and the pearl necklace lately presented to him by Beatrice. As he was contemplating with emotion these offerings of the purest affection, sounds of celestial music caught his ear : he lifted his eyes to heaven, and perceived a bright cloud, which seemed to approach him, and was suspended over the tree. The cloud then appeared to open, and he saw a divine form, which represented at the same moment to his imagination the adored image of Celanira and Beatrice ; a melodious voice then uttered these words : *Eternal justice is satisfied ; thy repentance and constancy have expiated our faults.* Scarcely were these salutary words pronounced, than Oliver saw Isambard and Beatrice

Beatrice near him, dressed in deep mourning, and prostrating themselves at the foot of the tree. Oliver, raising his eyes toward the cloud, then saw Celanira, who stretched out her arms to him. He strove to rush to her embrace, and at that instant he awoke.

#### KNIGHTHOOD.

UPON the day appointed, Zemni was invested with the honour of Knighthood. The ceremony began at noon, and took place in the chapel of the castle. When all the company were assembled, and the Duchess had seated herself under a canopy beside the altar, Oliver appeared leading Zemni by the hand, who was clothed in white. The Sponsor and the Novice, equally affected, but from different motives, approached the altar and fell upon their knees. The emotion of Oliver still increased, when he found himself beside Beatrice, at the foot of this altar. Had he accepted her hand, in such an attitude and on such a spot should he have received it! Zemni, after taking his oath, arose. The Ladies and the Duchess then advanced,

and

and the youthful Sylvia, the amiable daughter of Theobald, approaching Zemni, with trembling hands fastened on the gilt spurs. They both blushed ; and Sylvia, without venturing to lift up her eyes, hastened to withdraw, and placed herself behind the Ducheſſ.

The other Ladies then presented Zemni with the breast-plate and the gauntlets. Oliver now led the Novice under the Princess's canopy. Zemni knelt down. The Princess took from the hand of one of her 'ſquires a magnificent ſword : *In the name of God,* ſaid ſhe, *I create you a Knight :—be brave, hardy, and loyal* \*. On pronouncing this ſacred injunction, ſhe girt him with the ſword. The Knights now formed a circle round Zemni, and presented him with his helmet, his shield, and his lance. The new Knight then received the embrace of all the warriors, of whom he was now become the equal ; after which the assembly left the chapel. Zemni was then conducted to a ſpacious court filled with ſoldiers, who had been waiting with great impatience for the new Knight. He

\* This was the usual formulary.

was mounted upon his horse, and, according to ancient custom, left the place of his installation, and, attended by a band of music and a great number of followers, shewed himself in public.

## FRIENDS OF THE NINTH CENTURY.

THE war, which had been carried on for two months, still continued. Discord created divisions among the Allied Powers; some were desirous of peace, others of the prolongation of hostilities. The troops of the Confederate Princes fought with regret; and the heroic courage of their adversaries spread such terror, that the Generals, fearful of being ill-supported, did not venture upon any thing decisive; and nothing memorable took place during the rest of the winter, except a few single combats between the chiefs of the two parties, who reciprocally challenged each other.

In the mean time, Oliver, who of late had enjoyed more tranquillity of mind, attended by peaceful slumbers, recovered his health and vigour. Celanira still existed the same

at the bottom of his heart ; but he viewed her only through the medium of a religious veil, and, as she appeared to him in his dream, enjoying the palm of virtue. The words too he had heard in his dream, and which he considered as the voice of Heaven, that *his sufferings and repentance had expiated his crime*, had so far relieved his afflicted mind, that he no longer considered himself as the guilty wretch pursued by *eternal justice*. This persuasion restoring him to that peace which he had been so long a stranger to, he now maturely and calmly reflected upon his present situation ; examined the duties which were imposed upon him, and vowed to fulfil them all. He was well aware, that, independent of his friendship for Isambard, and of the gratitude he owed him, a second marriage would still be criminal ; and he considered, that all the felicity of a new union would be every moment empoisoned by this frightful thought : *The happiness I now enjoy I owe to the death of Celanira, who was assassinated by my hand ! Without that horrible crime, Beatrice would never be my wife.*

This

This reflection made him shudder, and never was ever present to his mind. "No, no," said he to himself, "were I not to find a rival in even the dearest of friends and brothers, yet Beatrice could never be mine. It is my duty impossible to hide from her for ever the sentiments she at least inspires, or at least to persuade her that they A arise only from the remembrance she revives. I ought to use all the influence I have over her in favour of Isambard: but I may be al- lowed to adore her in secret; and in this manner only, can I do it without remorse. O Celanira, it is thou alone whom I love in her! What other form but thine could have been able to fix my attention? What other mind but thy angelic one could have affections med such empire over mine? I adore her, because I adored thee! Had thy remembrance been lost, would she have been able to make this deep, this ineffaceable impression upon my heart? No: if my suffering had destroyed the ardent passion I cherished for thee, I should have beheld Beatrice with indifference."

Thus did Oliver justify a passion, which in fact, was so blended with the remembrance

of Celanira, that he could not consider it as  
and new affection. Feeling his soul again alive  
said to the delicious impressions of tenderness, it  
val revived his attachment to life; and he was  
Be able to consider the painful sacrifice he had  
duty imposed upon himself, if not without regret, at  
s she least without despair.

they Axianna, Countess of Caraffone, the cele-  
brated widow of Balahac, was now at the  
Court of the Duchess of Cleves. After the  
death of Balahac, this heroine had taken the  
command of his army, gained several battles,  
and made a glorious peace with the generals  
of Charlemagne. Axianna, upon hearing of  
the situation of Beatrice, flew to her succour,  
notwithstanding the distance of their domi-  
nions, and was now placed in the list of the  
Duchess's defenders.

Beatrice had discovered the sentiments of  
his Princess for Isambard, and she deter-  
mined, in consequence, to have an inter-  
view with the latter upon the subject. This  
unexpected summons from the Duchess gave  
Isambard more uneasiness than joy. He had  
observed for some time past, that she was  
much changed with regard to him: and he  
likewise

likewise perceived an absence of mind and melancholy in her, that struck him exceedingly. Often had he refused to give admittance to the distressing suspicions which afforded him a glimpse of the truth ; and he approached the Duchess with a presentiment which too well prepared his mind for the confidence she was going to repose in him. He found her at the time appointed alone. At first she seemed much embarrassed ; but shortly appearing to take courage, she informed him she was going to open her heart without any disguise. She added, that she was sensible this step must appear extraordinary, and that with great difficulty she had prevailed upon herself to take it ; but she hoped the most perfect esteem and the sincerest friendship would plead her excuse. After this introduction, she declared her affection for Oliver, and related every thing that had passed between them. She dwelt particularly upon the refusal which Oliver had made of her hand, and, above all, upon his endeavours to recommend his friend to her. " He did every thing," continued she, " to make me decide in your favour ; even

thing

thing, even to the acknowledgment of his misfortune and crime ; and knowing his deplorable destiny, I was sensible with him, that fidelity to the memory of Celanira was, in fact, a sacred duty. I do not pretend to his love ; I shall never be any thing more than a sister to him ; but I cannot fix him near me without giving him the title of husband. When in the course of time he shall know, that this virtuous union secures the happiness of my life ; when he shall be well convinced, that his presence and his friendship suffice for my felicity ; when in Beatrice he shall cease to see the rival of Celanira ; his wishes, I am persuaded, will accord with mine, if the sentiments he ~~knows~~ you entertain for me do not afford an invincible obstacle."—"O Heavens!" cried Isambard mournfully, " shall I be an obstacle to the happiness of Beatrice and Oliver?"—"Ah! generous Isambard," returned the Duchess, " it depends on you to make us all happy."—"I have myself now renounced happiness for ever," replied Isambard ; " but what can I do to contribute to yours? Speak, Madam,

Madam, and at least do not doubt of my obedience." — "Axianna," continued the Duchess, "entertains an affection for you. The beauty, virtue, and heroic qualities of this Princess render her worthy of captivating a hero like yourself. She is, too, the daughter of one of the most illustrious successors of the great Pelagius, and widow to a Prince who bore the title of King." — "Yes, Madam," interrupted Isambard, "I am aware how great a distance her birth and rank place between us; I can coolly survey the interval which separates us; and I know the whole extent of it. And allow me to tell you, that, being ready to immolate myself for your sake, I am desirous at least that my sacrifice should not be attributed to ambition. I would refuse a throne, were it offered me; and yet may you dispose of my liberty. But there is a surer and easier expedient at hand. You wish to give me a wife; I consent to take one, but choose her from among the Ladies who are about your own person. Point her out, Madam; and if she will accept my hand, I will instantly lead her

her to the altar ; and swear to conceal for ever from her the situation of my heart."— At these words, Beatrice, much affected, lifted her eyes bathed in tears to Isambard : " What are you proposing to me ?" said she, " can you imagine me capable of abusing such matchless generosity ?" " How, Madam !" returned Isambard, " shall I not be certain, that the wife I should receive from your hands will be worthy of my esteem ? and can I henceforward indulge happier hopes ? I would spare you the embarrassment of directing my choice, were I myself capable of making a reasonable one ; but I have no intimacy here but with three persons whose hearts are engaged ; with Delia, Amalberga, and Sylvia. With the others I am scarcely acquainted, you must therefore be my guide." The simplicity with which Isambard explained himself added so great a value to the sacrifice he offered, that the Duchess was unable to express the sense of her admiration and gratitude. She contemplated him in silence, while her tears flowed abundantly. " Cease," cried he, " to distress yourself upon my account. It is true, the

passion you reject will end only with my life. But is not Oliver as dear to me as love itself? That friendship which has so long been the only passion of my heart, can never be weakened by any other attachment: Oliver, though my rival, is still the most affectionate, the most generous, and the noblest of men. Accustomed so many years to pride myself in bearing the name of his brother in arms, in admiring his exploits and his glory, and in interesting myself in his successes and his sorrows: those sorrows, the excess of which has so closely cemented our union, that, had he never known Beatrice, and she had offered me her hand on condition of separating myself from him, I should have made the sacrifice to friendship. Unfortunate Oliver, in whose bitter tears I have so often sympathised! . . . . Ah! may he at length lose the remembrance of his sufferings! You alone, Madam, can make him adequate compensation; and I can forget myself, if I see you happy in each other."—"No," cried Beatrice, "it would be out of my power to console him for the sacrifices you would make; and Oliver ought to prefer such a friend to every

every other consideration." Isambard was going to reply, when a page entered to inform the Duchess, that a courier had announced the arrival of the troops sent to her aid by the Emperor Charlemagne.

7

## AN ATTACK.

HOS RILITIES were now again commenced, and had continued near three weeks without any decisive advantage on either side, when Oliver had a conference with the other French Knights, upon the operations of the war, and communicated to them a plan of attack he had himself concerted. The other generals at first opposed the measure; but, after some debate, it was adopted; and the plan of it was equally bold and skilful. When the Duchess was informed of the decision, she gave herself up to all the disquietude which an enterprise of such temerity was calculated to create. She reflected likewise with no little anxiety, that Oliver having conceived the idea of it, was in some respects answerable for the event, and that he would brave every danger to ensure its success. It was

planned, that on the following morning, a little before day-break, an attack should be made upon the Princes in their own camp; and this was accordingly executed. After an obstinate battle, the army of Beatrice forced the first entrenchments of the enemy; but, soon checked by the valour and ability of the Count of Bavaria, was obliged to have recourse to a second battle. Victory for a while remained undecided. Gerold, remarking that the troops commanded by the Duke of Friuli began to fall into disorder, sent him assistance. At the same time Olive advanced up to the Count of Bavaria, and assailed him with impetuosity. The Count was pressed so close, that he could neither manage his horse, which began to prance and rear, nor make any use of his lance. Oliver seized the bridle of the horse. The Count instantly spurred him on with great violence; the beast took a leap; and Gerold, at the same time endeavouring to strike his adversary with his sword, himself received a dangerous wound. Oliver now again rushed upon his foe, driving away and overturning all who opposed him. Gerold, no longer able

able to defend himself, was disarmed, and taken prisoner, by the Knight of the Swan. At the same instant a party of Gerold's troops laid down their arms, and yielded themselves up to the conqueror. The rout then became general on the part of the enemy. The Duke of Friuli was slain by Isambard; the camp was forced; a prodigious number of prisoners were taken; and the battle proved decisive. Oliver was feelingly alive to the glory of the day. To him was owing the plan of attack, and the overthrow of the Count of Bavaria; and the whole army instantly decreed him the honours of a triumph.

Isambard hastened to bear the happy news of the victory to the Duchess; and arriving before the rest, his appearance was unexpected. Beatrice, on seeing him, endeavoured to rise; but could not support herself, and sunk down again upon her seat, pronouncing with a tremulous voice the name of Oliver. "Madam," said Isambard, "you will soon see Oliver. He is safe; and his genius and valour have terminated the war. He brings you the Count of Bavaria, whom he has taken

prisoner. You have now no more enemies, and it is Oliver who has delivered you from them."

" Dear and generous Isambard!" cried Beatrice, shedding a torrent of tears, and holding out her arms to him. Isambard, affected, knelt before her; and Beatrice, leaning toward him, let her head recline upon his shoulder. This further avowal of her tenderness for Oliver was sensibly felt by Isambard; he experienced a delicious sensation, though not unmixed with pain; and he in the same moment both envied and blessed his rival.

Shortly the noise of warlike instruments announced the return of the conquerors, and Beatrice went forth to receive them. The hero of the day, the modest Oliver, confounded in the crowd, marched in silence behind Axianna, Thederic, and the French troop, giving his arm to the Count of Bavaria, who was supported on the other side by Giaffar, who had given himself up prisoner in order to partake the fate of his friend. The Duchess, notwithstanding her own happiness, could not refrain from shedding

ding tears on seeing Gerold in the melancholy condition into which fortune had thrown him. She felt how much this prince must suffer in appearing before her in this fallen state. Full of the idea, Beatrice advanced toward the Count, to say all that the most delicate generosity could inspire. Gerold looked at her, and replied in a noble and respectful manner. The Duchess conducted him to one of the pavilions of the castle. She then called her surgeons, who examined his wounds, and judged them not to be of the most dangerous kind. Beatrice prohibited all kind of rejoicing and tumultuous festivity in the palace; but she passed the rest of the day with the Knights, who were assembled together. Oliver sat out of the circle; yet Beatrice often met his looks; and not being able to converse with him, she seemed to be wholly taken up during the evening with Isambard, to whom she thus testified her gratitude for having announced events which had rendered her so happy.

## PEACE.

AS soon as the Count of Bavaria's health was restored, the Duchess calling all her defenders in council, they assembled in a spacious hall, to discuss the terms of peace which she should propose to her vanquished enemies. The King of Pannonia and the Duke of Benevento spoke first, and maintained, that the Duchess, now having it in her power to give the law, ought to avail herself of this favourable occasion of enlarging her dominions, by requiring many cessions, and among others that of the country bordering on the Duchy of Cleves, which belonged to the Count of Bavaria. Several Knights seconded the opinions of Theudon and Gramaldo, and pretended that the peace would not prove lasting, if the Duchess did not deprive her enemies of the greater part of their power. Isambard with great eloquence refuted the reasoning of this too prevalent policy. After enlarging upon the subject, "Finally," said he, "I maintain that the sole mean of rendering peace lasting, and truly glorious, is, to extirpate

extirpate all the roots of hatred, to suppress all resentment, and to afford the example of generous moderation in prosperity. Theobald and Oger the Dane were of the same way of thinking: but Roger annexed a new motion to his suffrage. "Sovereigns," said he, "should especially, in their treaties of peace, have regard to the public welfare, and the sacred interests of humanity. It was thus that Charlemagne, in his treaties with the Saxons, required no other condition than the abolition of their abominable sacrifices. The enemies of the Duchess of Cleves, born in civilized countries, have, it is true, none of these horrible superstitions, but all these princes are despots, and may become tyrants. It seems to me, it would be worthy of the Princess to oblige them to enact wise and beneficent laws, similar to those which secure the happiness of her own subjects." This idea was applauded by several young Knights of his own age; but opposed by Oliver, who spoke as follows: "To check proscription and murder," said he, "is, I must allow, the worthiest use that can be made of power, and the happiest consequence

of victory ; but, thanks to heaven, the Duchess of Cleves has not these sad enormities to repress. All laws that found morality does not condemn are essentially good, if they suit the nation which has adopted them. In the eye of reason, the most perfect laws may have their inconvenience in some countries. Climate, habits, and manners, must produce among different nations different governments ; and a people that would impose its own laws upon other states would conceive a project at once gigantic and puerile, and display nothing better than extravagant and ridiculous tyranny. The august Beatrice would never, therefore, adopt such language. In a word, the experience of many ages can alone attest the solidity of human institutions. The first legislator of Europe, Charlemagne himself, notwithstanding his age and experience, and after employing himself a number of years upon his capitularies, yet never considered himself entitled to impose them even on his own nation. He only ventured to offer them, and submit them to general discussion. In fine, it is reason, it is time, and not violence and authority, that

can

can produce useful revolutions; and legislators who are desirous of propagating their ideas, have only one rational and justifiable way of doing it, which is, to maintain peace and plenty in their dominions, and to render the country superior to all others in wisdom, virtue, and prosperity."

Oliver's discourse was particularly approved by Beatrice. She was pleased with the style of frankness and truth which pervaded it; she had too much greatness of mind not to despise flattery; but the language of sincerity and reason in the mouth of Oliver sounded still more welcome in her ear, as it afforded her a new testimony of his esteem. At last she spoke herself, and declared, that after having attentively listened to the different counsels which she had been receiving, she persisted in her intention of offering peace, and imposing, but one sole condition to her enemies, that of defraying the expences of the war. The Duchess closed her speech with a declaration of her most grateful thanks to all the Knights.

"Desiring to perpetuate," added she, "the memory of my gratitude, I have caused a

marble column to be raised, upon which are engraved the names of all my defenders. This column will be erected to-morrow at the entrance of the forest, and the following inscription will be read upon it : *The laws of this country guarantee its inhabitants from every kind of oppression : But henceforward every female stranger, who shall repair to this column, craving protection and succour, shall find both at the Court of Beatrice, whenever she can prove herself to be the object of unjust persecution.*"

" Two guards standing sentinel close by the column shall be authorised to interrogate these unfortunate fugitives. I have thought I could not better do honour to the heroes assembled in the Duchy of Cleves for the purpose of defending an oppressed female, than by imitating their generosity as far as lay in my power ; and a column decorated with such illustrious names is well adapted to become the refuge of innocence and misfortunes." Here Beatrice was obliged to stop, to receive in turn the thanks of all the Knights : afterwards, again addressing the assembly, but not without a degree of embarrassment,

rassment, "All my defenders," said she, "are alike illustrious and generous, and entitled to equal gratitude; I am sensible, that among such renowned warriors, their exploits would have been similar had chance thrown the same advantage in their way; and that when a conqueror is proclaimed out of such a list of heroes, it is the most fortunate who is crowned, and not the most valiant. But since the laws of chivalry have consecrated this custom; since they, whom fortune has favoured in battle, receive the palm of victory; no one can be surprised at my offering to the Knights of the Swan a particular homage of gratitude. The generous Isambard has vanquished the Count of Thuringia; and by the overthrow of the Duke of Friuli, has contributed to the success of the battle. What obligations have I not to his brother in arms! He it is who formed the late plan of attack, and to whom I am indebted for victory. Finally, it is he, who, by taking the Count of Bavaria prisoner, has terminated the war. Those who are now listening to me, have already awarded him the prize of that memorable day: to them it belongs to dispense

dispense glory; and their suffrage is the true recompence of a warrior. I do not pretend to confer any; I am only desirous of fulfilling a duty, by manifesting the gratitude I feel.' I therefore declare, that, in imitation of the neighbouring princes, I am going to institute in my dominion a particular order of Chivalry, of which I shall be myself the head. My subjects alone can be received into it; and I shall grant it, without any regard to birth, to such as shall distinguish themselves by virtue, courage, and generosity. This new institution will be called the *Knights of the Swan*. The insignia of the order will for ever recall its origin; the ribband white, and the medal representing the emblem and device of Isambard and Oliver.'" At these words, the Knights of the Swan, much affected, made a low bow. At the same instant Theobald, Oger the Dane, and all the French Knights applauded the measure with enthusiasm; but the other Knights kept a gloomy silence, and the expression of discontent was visible on their countenances. Several murmurs were heard. This appeared to the Duchess so extremely unjust, that the

resentment

resentment she felt dissipated the embarrassment she had hitherto experienced. She then rose with a calm air; "I have fulfilled my duty," said she, "and retire from this august assembly with great satisfaction. To-morrow I shall institute the order of the Knights of the Swan; and I invite all those who wish to attend the ceremony, to meet in this hall at ten o'clock in the morning." On pronouncing these words, the Duchess bowed to the assembly, and withdrew. Accompanied by Axianna, and some other persons, she immediately repaired to the Count of Bavaria, whom she found alone. She informed him of her intentions relative to peace, and recommended him to sign the treaty. The Count listened to Beatrice with great emotion; and when she had left off speaking, "Your generosity, Madam," said he, "affects without astonishing me. I ought to expect to give as a ransom that portion of my dominions which forms the limits of yours. Those countries lying so near the Duchy of Cleves have been long, in my estimation, the most valuable of all my possessions. I must now exile myself from

from them for ever; but since you deign not to make the acquisition, I shall at least have the pleasure of disposing of them in a manner that will prove agreeable to you, by conferring them on Giaffar; and I shall at the same time be making a return to the friendship of that valuable man, by establishing him near you." The Duchess replied in terms expressive of what she felt at this generosity of Gerold, to whom she now presented the paper for signing the treaty of peace. Beatrice, then, declaring to the Count of Bavaria that he was free, requested his friendship, promised him hers, and terminated this conversation by giving him her hand with that grace and air of frankness which added such lustre to all her actions. At this moment Giaffar entered the room, and the Duchess soon after retired.

## THE CONCLUSION.

O divine amitié, felicité parfaité!  
Seul mouvement de l'ame, où l'excès soit permis!  
Idole d'un cœur juste, et passion du sage,  
Amitié! que ton nom couronne mon ouvrage!

THE institution of the order of the Swan, which the Duchess had announced, had excited such jealousy among the Knights, that the same day the four sons of Duke Aimon, the Duke of Behevento, Astolpus the Paladin, and some others, took leave of Beatrice, and instantly departed. The King of Pannonia, dissembling his dark resentment, did not follow their example; he remained, though convinced that the heart of the Duchess was at length disposed of; and he imagined that Isambard was the object of her affections. This mistake was the result of many observations, which were naturally calculated to mislead a man of his disposition. He knew that Isambard might have pretended to the happiness of consoling the beautiful and illustrious Axianna for the loss of her

her husband ; yet Isambard, far from endeavouring to secure so brilliant a conquest, had openly declared his passion for the Duchess. Theudon could not conceive he would have made such a sacrifice without the certainty of being beloved by Beatrice. At the same time he perceived the same intimacy between Isambard and his brother in arms. Hence he concluded that it was impossible they should be rivals. Besides, no one was ignorant that Oliver's melancholy arose from an unhappy passion, over which neither reason nor time could triumph. In fine, Oliver, always keeping by himself, and only manifesting for Beatrice that admiration which no one could refuse her, paid her none of those attentions which either declare or betray a passion; and, in conversing with her, he had neither the affiduity, the earnestness, nor the language of a lover. From all these reflections, Theudon, being entirely persuaded of the mutual passion of Beatrice and Isambard, felt all the hatred and jealousy of which he was susceptible. Axianna, the amiable Countess of Cancassone, was under a like mistake with Theudon : she also believed that Isam-

bard,

bard, beloved by the Duchess, would shortly obtain her hand; but having been able to change the early passion she had felt for the Knight of the Swan into friendship, she earnestly wished for his happiness; and, desirous of being a witness to it, had promised Beatrice not to leave her till after the rejoicings on account of the peace, which were to continue several days. The youthful Roger, who was passionately in love with Axianna, observed with inexpressible joy events which seemed to presage the union of Beatrice and Isambard. Being no longer in dread of so formidable a rival, he cherished those hopes which in fact were eventually realised. The other Knights, except the Knights of the Swan, were about to return to the Court of Charlemagne. Isambard, full of anxiety and incertitude, bereft of hope, and undermined in his designs, waited in silence the result of so many events. He dreaded to ask Oliver any questions, and could not discover his intentions.

As for the unhappy Oliver, he found himself in that distressing situation, in which all the movements of the heart are repressed and

and combated by duty and reason. The events of the day, together with what had passed in the council, had so powerful an effect upon him, that, not finding himself in a situation to take any part in a general conversation, he avoided sitting down to supper, on the pretext of a violent head-ach. Retiring to his chamber, he gave himself up to the most painful train of reflections. The conduct of the Duchess toward her enemies, and her defenders; the character of generosity and greatness of mind which she so eminently supported; and the late proofs he had received of her affection, had worked up his admiration for her to the highest pitch. Yet he was enchanted without being seduced: honour and friendship still held the same empire over him; and, faithful to his vows, he was more than ever sensible of the necessity of removing hence. But, though he persisted in his design, his resolution was accompanied with severe conflicts. He considered Beatrice as now satisfied and happy, not supposing the object of so much affection could ever have the courage to break the ties of sentiment and gratitude. He anticipated

anticipated her astonishment and affliction; he shuddered, yet without shrinking from his resolution. "Just heaven!" cried he, "into what a gulf has my weakness and imprudence plunged me! I must then be ungrateful and unfeéling, in order not to be base and perjured! Dreadful situation, in which affection and reason preserve an equal sway; in which I can neither delude nor conquer myself! O Beatrice, in reward of your favours, and the ingenuous and affecting proofs of your tendernes, I am going then to bid you an eternal adieu! at least, the sentiments of this distracted heart shall then be laid open to you. Alas! even in quitting you, I dare not declare them in person. How should I have the power to tear myself from you, if once I gave way to the happiness of telling you what I feel? But you shall find these confessions of my heart expressed in a letter, which shall be delivered to you after my departure. Oh, how grateful will it prove to me, to declare in that letter the whole extent of my passion, of my feelings, and affliction! But the time employed

ployed in writing it will be the last moments of happiness in reserve for Oliver."

While the unfortunate Knight of the Swan gave himself up to these painful reflections, Beatrice, whose thoughts and projects ever had Oliver for their object, informed Zemni that she had obtained the consent of Theobald to his union with Sylvia. "Tomorrow," continued she, "after the ceremony of the institution of the Order of the Swan, you will receive the hand of Theobald's daughter." She then added, she should herself take the charge of his fortune. And although it had been declared that none but her own subjects were admissible into this new order, founded by gratitude to his benefactor and hers, she should nevertheless make an exception in his favour. "The husband of Sylvia can never be considered a stranger in the Duchy of Cleves," continued the Duchess, "and it is my duty to treat the son of Theobald as if he had been born in my own dominions. Go, Zemni, and consult Oliver; it is he alone who can decide your fate; go and speak to him."

At

At these words, Zemni, overcome with joy and gratitude, ran to Oliver's apartment, and related all that Beatrice had been saying to him. Oliver was greatly affected at the recital. He felt that the favours lavished upon this young man, so dear to him, were so many proofs of the ingenuous and delicate tenderness of the Duchess, and could only aggravate his despair. Dissembling, however, the various sensations with which he was agitated, he replied to Zemni in a calm manner, and was desirous of going with him immediately to thank the Duchess. But Zemni stopping him said, "One moment, Signor, I entreat you not to make me undertake an engagement which must attach me to the Duchy of Cleves, if you yourself be not decided to continue here. My gratitude to you is the first sentiment of my heart, as well as my duty: my glory depends upon accompanying you, and love and fortune can contribute nothing to my happiness if separated from you."

Oliver made no other reply than tenderly embracing Zemni, and desired him to accompany him, and wait upon the Duchess.

Zemni

Zemni obeyed with joy, considering this as a tacit avowal of an intention which Oliver would not yet openly declare. Of this he was the more easily persuaded, as he had long perceived the mutual passion of the Ducheſſ and Oliver. The two Knights found Beatrice in the drawing-room. On seeing them enter, ſhe arose, and, accompanied by Theobald, led them to the adjacent closet. The interview was ſhort. Oliver ſpoke but little, but in a manner which gave Beatrice pleasure. On leaving him, ſhe reminded him that the company met on the morrow at ten o'clock. "That day," added ſhe, "will be one of the brightest of my life: I ſhall consecrate it wholly to gratitude — to the deareſt ſentiments of my heart."

Oliver, confused and trembling, retired in haste. He paſſed almost the whole night in an agitation which prevented him from going to bed, and, when relieved from these ſtruggles, he fell into a kind of lethargy, in which he preserved the ſensation of his griefs without the aid of reaſon to moderate their excess. The unfortunate Oliver, under this

painful

painful suspension of his faculties, continually saw Isambard, Celanira, and Beatrice pass before him as plaintive shades. He fancied he listened to deep groans, and the accents of a menacing voice. He started, and frequent interruptions of his slumbers dissipated these melancholy illusions. But, on recovering his faculties, he was again the prey to one oppressive thought—a thought which overcame every other—that *of its being his duty to sacrifice Beatrice to the memory of Celanira!*

At nine o'clock Oliver was relieved from this painful state. He heard a knocking at his door, and he was informed that his friends were expecting him in the drawing-room. Oliver hastened to adjust the disorder of his garments; when Isambard and Zemni came in quest of him. They informed him, that the King of Pannonia would not be present at the festival, and that he had formed a pretext for absence during the whole day. The Knights of the Swan entered the drawing-room a moment before the Duchess. All the windows were open, the courts, the galleries, and the apartments were crowded with the

people and troops. At length the Duchess appeared; and the palace immediately resounded with shouts of joy and applause. Beatrice, who was much affected, stopped in the middle of the drawing-room: every eye was fixed upon her, and contemplated her with admiration and surprise. Sweetness of disposition and sentiment were depicted in her looks; but at the same time an air of triumph and delight threw a grace over her whole person, and rendered it more than ordinarily striking. She had been usually dressed in white, and with extreme simplicity, since the arrival of the Knights of the Swan. She now wore a gold brocade embroidered with pearls and emeralds. The white ribband, and the medal of the order of the Swan, formed a graceful contrast to those colours. The Duchess advanced to a window, and placed herself in a balcony which overlooked the courts; and, being in hearing of the people and soldiers, she read the treaty of peace, and afterwards made a speech to announce the institution of the order of the Knights of the Swan, and the motives which induced her to found it. When she left off speaking,

speaking, the people applauded with transport, and at the same instant the soldiers sung the song of Oliver. Tears of delight ran down the cheeks of Beatrice. She retired from the window, and, giving notice that she was going to the chapel, called the Knights of the Swan, and, leaning upon their arms, immediately left the room, accompanied by the other Knights and all the Ladies of the Court.

Upon entering the chapel, the Duchess took her seat near the altar. The ceremony then began, and the venerable Theobald was the first invested with the new order. Beatrice, who revered her virtuous tutor as a father, would not suffer him, according to the rules of etiquette, to kneel before her; and, on putting on the ribband of the order, she arose and embraced him. Towards the other Knights she followed the common usages of Chivalry, and, on presenting the medal, repeated the formulary to each Knight, saying, *Be valiant, beneficent, and generous, like those who first wore this emblem.*

The nuptials of Zemni and Sylvia terminated this interesting ceremony, during which Oliver successively experienced all the delicious but heart-rending sensations which admiration, gratitude, constraint, and love, approved by reason and combated by duty, could inspire. Upon leaving the chapel, the company repaired to Axianna's pavilion, in which the Duchess intended to dine. This building was decorated with new ornaments. Over the front and pilasters were seen ingenious inscriptions to the glory of Axianna, celebrating the virtues and recalling the splendid actions of this heroine.—And thus did Beatrice, while indulging the dearest sentiment of her heart in immortalizing the services and the name of Oliver, avail herself likewise of the opportunity of paying a tribute to gratitude and friendship.

When the repast was ended, Oliver, whose mind was too much disturbed to take any part in the conversation, left the company, and walked into the forest. As soon as he found himself alone, his tears began to flow with bitterness; and, wholly absorbed in his

melancholy

melancholy reflections, he was wandering about the forest, when he perceived Lancelot, Angelbert, and Giaffar. Not being able to shun these Knights, he joined them ; and they invited him to walk with them to the column upon which Beatrice had caused the names of all her defenders to be engraved.

At the turn of the road they met a 'squire belonging to the King of Pannonia, who, on seeing Oliver, asked him whether his brother in arms was in the forest. Oliver, being surprised at this question, wished in turn to know if the 'squire was charged with any message from his master to Isambard. " Yes, Signor," replied he, " I have a note to deliver to him."—" Give it me," returned Oliver ; " I can easily guess its contents. Isambard shall receive it immediately ; and I pledge myself in his name, that he will accept what is proposed to him." When the 'squire was gone, Oliver opened the note, and read, as he expected, a challenge for Isambard. Theudon, in calling him out, named the place, and appointed that very day at an hour before sun-set. Oliver re-

quested the Knights with him not to mention this affair to any one; and informed them, he meant to conceal it from Isambard, and to fight in his stead; and this would be the more practicable, as, being of the same height, and having the same arms, Theudon would be unable to recognise him when his visor was down. The Knights promised secrecy, on condition that they were all three present at the combat. They then returned to the castle, and Oliver went into the drawing-room. His deportment was now more composed, and he informed his friends, that as Giaffar was in the afternoon to take his leave of Gerold, who was setting off for Bavaria, he was going to accompany him part of the way. Isambard followed his friend to the great flight of steps, and expressed a desire to go with him and Giaffar. Oliver persuaded him that he had better stay with the Ducheſs, but on leaving him he embraced him; a circumstance which was unusual when he left him but for a short time. Oliver and Giaffar waited on the ramparts for Angelbert and Lancelot, who there rejoined them. These three friends then repeated their

their sentiments respecting the combat in which Oliver was about to engage. "Consider," said they, "Isambard will certainly be dissatisfied with this generous artifice." "No," returned Oliver: "I employ a stratagem, it is true, but I use no fraud. Are not Isambard's enemies mine? When I discover them before him, have I not the right of combating the first? And believe me, my friends, that in the present case I act merely equitably. Do not then disturb, with useless reflections, the soft tranquillity which I now feel reviving in my soul—in that soul which has been so long the prey of violent agitation! I know not what happy foreboding seems to re-establish its long-lost serenity; give me then leave to enjoy it."

The three Knights, surprised at this discourse, looked at each other, and made no further reply. They had never before heard the unhappy Oliver speak with so much frankness on his situation. At the entrance of the forest they found their 'squires, who clad them in armour. They had only a quarter of a league to go before they reached the appointed spot, and they arrived there

in a few minutes. Theudon, attended by four 'quires, was waiting for them. The knights who accompanied Oliver then advanced, and informed the King of Pannonia that they were only there as spectators of the combat, adding, *There is the Knight of the Swan ready to receive the token of battle.* The King made no reply, but threw down his glove, which Oliver took up. Then the two foes, after having saluted the seconds, fell upon each other. They fought a considerable time on horseback without receiving any wounds; but Oliver's lance was shivered in pieces, and the King's horse fell in consequence of a violent shock, and in which the lance of Theudon likewise fell from his hand: upon this he left his steed, and drew his sword. Oliver then springing lightly from his horse, drew his. He assailed Theudon with great impetuosity. The latter, surprised, staggered, and drew back a few paces. Oliver, pressing closely, gave him a mortal wound, and overthrew him expiring on the ground.

As soon as the generous Oliver saw him fall, his first movement was to give him succour.

cour. He approached him. Theudon held out his hand. Oliver, touched with compassion, threw aside his sword, and, stooping down, was going to lift up his vanquished foe; when the perfidious Theudon, having a dagger concealed in his belt, suddenly drew it, and plunged it into the bosom of Oliver, who cried out as he fell—*Thank heaven I have preserved my friend from assassination!* Giaffar and the other Knights gave a terrible cry, and rushed toward Oliver and his murderer. The latter had already breathed his last: and the Knight of the Swan, bathed in blood, seemed to have only a few moments to live. His wound was then bound up with handkerchiefs; and a litter was made of the branches of trees, upon which he was laid. His distracted friends bore him in this manner to the castle. The 'squires belonging to the execrable Theudon had endeavoured to make their escape the moment the assassination took place; but the 'squires of the Knights secured their persons, in order to produce still further testimony of Oliver's victory, and the crime of Theudon. Oliver, now appearing to recover a little,

recommended to his friends to take the back road to the palace, in order not to pass before the windows of the Duchess's apartment.

They moved slowly forward, and night came on before they reached the castle. On approaching the court in which the pavilion stood, they heard music and songs of joy, in which the name of Oliver was a thousand times repeated. The Knights shuddered, and their anguish still increased as they entered the court. A brilliant illumination displayed the splendour of the brightest daylight ; the walls were decorated with garlands of flowers, and laurel wreaths were interwoven with the cyphers of the Knights of the Swan. An immense multitude of troops and people filled the court ; and the French and German soldiers, confounded in the throng with the peasants of the neighbourhood, mixed their warlike songs with the more rural strains of the villagers, and danced to the united sounds of the martial cymbal and rustic bagpipe. The Knights, obliged to traverse this court, were aware of the terrible impression the unexpected sight of the

dying

dying Oliver must make upon the multitude ; and, indeed, scarcely had the people cast their eyes on the unfortunate Knight, than the most moving expressions of sorrow succeeded in a moment to the acclamations of joy. On every side were heard groans, and the most lamentable cries ; and the whole palace soon re-echoed with these mournful sounds. The Knights hastened to send in quest of surgeons, and to inform Isambard and the Duchess of the tragical event, since it was impossible to prepare them for it.— Oliver was carried to his apartments. Giaffar laid him on his couch, and afterwards sat down by his bed-side. Oliver perceiving his grief and consternation, “ My dear Giaffar,” said he, “ you will soon know the inmost secrets of my heart ; then will you no longer lament my approaching end.” The door then opened, and Isambard pale and breathless appeared, and, throwing himself into the arms of Oliver, cried out with faltering accents, “ Ah ! what hast thou done ? Ah ! cruel friend ! and this for me !” He could say no more, his tears choaked his utterance.

At this moment the Duchess entered, attended by Zemni and the surgeons. Her countenance feelingly announced the dreadful sensations of her heart; yet was she able to compose herself, and to be mistress of all the fortitude of which she stood in need, dreading to increase Oliver's danger by adding to his emotion. She then requested Isambard to withdraw a moment from his friend's bed, and, calling her surgeons, "Their skill," said she, " relieved the Count of Bavaria, and I flatter myself that the wounds of the generous Oliver are not so dangerous."— After uttering these words with a considerable degree of firmness, Beatrice left the room. She did not seclude herself in her apartment, but received the visits of her friends, who all loved and admired Oliver; so that their presence could not prove unwelcome to Beatrice. She now ceased to act under any restraint before them, and felt a kind of consolation in being no longer under the necessity of disguising her sentiments in favour of Oliver: she was even desirous that every one should know that she loved him, that she was beloved again, and that he had

had refused her hand. Bathed in tears and afflicted with the keenest anguish, she enjoyed at least the new gratification of laying open her soul, and of publicly avowing a passion which she had so long dissembled.— Although her grief was inexpressible, it was somewhat moderated by hope. The unfortunate Beatrice still deluded herself respecting Oliver's condition, not being aware of the immediate danger of it. The surgeons, after having dressed his wounds, informed Isambard, that they should take off the bandage on the next morning, and that they should then be able to judge of his situation. No one in the castle retired to rest ; Isambard, Zemni, and the three Knights passed the night in Oliver's apartment, in mournful silence, without daring to communicate to each other their dreadful apprehensions. Isambard's eyes were continually fixed on Oliver ; he watched every motion ; and upon his countenance could be traced all that was expressed upon that of his dying friend. He neither reflected nor thought, but he suffered and languished with him, and,

and, like him, appeared to grow weaker, and to approach his last moments.

At seven the following morning Oliver received the second visit from the surgeons, who came to take off the dressings from his wounds. Oliver was then desirous that all his friends, even Isambard and Zemni, should leave the room, and he made them promise not to return before he should send for them. The surgeons examined his wounds without uttering a single word. When they had done, Oliver, looking at them with a kind and tranquil countenance, said, "I feel that my case is mortal; but I am deeply interested in knowing how much longer I have yet to live, and you are in justice bound to answer me this question without evasion." At these words, the surgeons seemed confused and distressed; but Oliver urged them with such firmness, that they at length declared, that the duration of his life could not, they feared, exceed that of the day.

Oliver heard this sentence without surprise or emotion. He then requested they would go and acquaint Giaffar and Lance-

lot

lot of this, and beg them, in his name, to communicate it to the Princess and Isambard ; " and at the same time recommend them," added he, " to allow me a few minutes of uninterrupted solitude, which I want to consecrate to religion." The surgeons promised to execute his orders, and left the room.

Oliver sent for a Priest, and, with a fervent and elevated piety, fulfilled all the duties enjoined by religion. After this, he conversed with him for some time. The priest then retired to an adjacent chamber. Oliver now called for the casket which contained the most precious objects he possessed : a lock of hair and golden chain, the gift of Celenira ; and the scarf of Witikind, given as a token of gratitude to Oliver for preserving his life. The dying Knight taking these precious gifts out of the casket, exclaimed, " Wretched is the man who only carries bloody laurels to the grave ! Henceforth, my glory and renown will belong to those only who have loved me : But this remains, and shall accompany me to the tomb ! Yes, this scarf shall be laid upon my breast. It was the reward of a generous action inspired

solely

solely by humanity, and on which I now reflect with more delight than on all the splendid triumphs acquired by arms !” On saying this, Oliver placed the scarf upon his bed. Afterward, endeavouring to recollect himself, he remained silent some time; when having summoned all his resolution, he sent word to the Duchess and Isambard, that he would be glad to see them.

Lancelot and Giaffar had discharged their melancholy commission. The former was still shut up with the unhappy Isambard and Zemni; while Giaffar was participating, in the Duchess’s chamber, the grief and terror of Axianna, and of those friends who held the wretched Beatrice in their arms, struggling in convulsions, and who had just recovered from a fainting fit. At length, Giaffar taking advantage of a moment in which she appeared to be a little composed, informed her, that Oliver requested to see her. She started; and her tears, which had hitherto been checked, now flowed apace. She endeavoured to rise, but sunk down again upon her seat. “ Ah, Madam,” said Giaffar, “ consider that Oliver expects you ! What

will

will be the bitterness of his last moments, to see you in this state!"

Beatrice made no reply, but got up, and, leaning upon his arm, went out of the room with him: Giaffar accompanied her as far as the door of Oliver's chamber, and, leaving her there, retired, and she entered alone.— Isambard was already there, and sitting by the bed-side, half concealed by the curtains, so that scarcely a glimpse of his pale and torpid countenance was to be seen. The Duchess advanced with faltering steps towards the bed, and sunk down into a chair.

Oliver had dismissed all his attendants. A moment's silence took place; after which, he spoke as follows: "I now find myself," said he, "between two objects, which partake all the affections of my heart. I wish to make them depositaries of my last thoughts and my last wishes." On uttering these words, he took off the pearl necklace from his arm; and putting it into the casket which contained Celanira's offerings, "In this solemn moment," continued he, "I may be allowed to unite the gifts of Celanira with the favours

favours of Beatrice. I am desirous that my tomb, without inscription or ornament, may be placed at the foot of a service-tree, and that these precious tokens be for ever suspended on its branches. I wish likewise to carry with me to my grave the scarf of Witikind and the portrait of Celanira : let them both be laid in my coffin."—Here Oliver left off speaking, and was answered only by stifled groans and broken accents. "I know your generous hearts," returned he, "and I am certain that the last wishes of your friend will not be forgotten."—"Yes," cried the Duchess, "were it possible Beatrice could exist when Oliver is no more, you would surely be obeyed!" A flood of tears accompanied these words. Oliver began to be agitated, and his head fell back upon the pillow. The Duchess trembled, and her tears on a sudden ceased to flow. "Doubt not of my resolution," returned she in an earnest tone: "I can force myself to any thing in obedience to you; I can even promise to live, if you command it."—"Well," said Oliver, "know then, there is another

will

wish I have yet to form, and I entreat you both to hear me without interruption. Cease to afflict yourselves, and to lament my fate. Death alone, O Beatrice, could skreen me from the opprobrium of perjury, or from the dreadful punishment of ingratitude toward you. Alas, you are acquainted with my crime and my sentiments; but you could not conceive the excess of my horror and remorse, and you were likewise ignorant of my future resolutions. Yes; I had sworn to flee from you, to leave you for ever. On this very day it was my intention to depart. To-day I should have taken an eternal farewell; and would not that have been always dying? And what kind of death, just Heaven! I should have carried with me your merited reproaches, and have had to support at the same time, your grief, my own, and that of my friend!—I shall not now experience these unspeakable torments; but, alas! what heart-rending regret still remains in store for me! O Beatrice! O my brother! it is in your power only to remove it; you can alleviate the dreadful pressure of my remorse. Alas! I cannot descend in peace to the grave, but

in

in uniting for ever, in indissoluble ties, the only objects that are dear to me."—"Who? I?" exclaimed Beatrice, "when I am already dying! The prey of an invincible grief, which will triumph over me to my latest breath, can I consent? No, Oliver, do not hope it." Beatrice pronounced these words with the accents of indignation and grief, and her sobbing prevented her further utterance.

Isambard, who till this moment chilled by despair had kept a profound silence, now drew aside the curtain. "Oliver," said he, "canst thou venture to conceive the project of forming an union which may again attach me to life? My eyes are fixed upon the grave; I wait only till it opens to receive me; and I solemnly vow"—"Stop," interrupted Oliver, "stop. I have only another word to say. If you both persist in your refusal, you will hasten and imbitter my last moments." At these words, Isambard and Beatrice fell upon their knees, and wept abundantly. Oliver took their hands, which he united in his own. "Live," said he, "to honour my memory: live together, the better to preserve the recollection of your friend.

Ah!

Ah! it is in the distracted bosom of Isambard that the tears of Beatrice should fall ; and who but Beatrice could share the grief of Isambard ? Tender and elevated minds, to you I deliver as a deposit, the sacred flame of love and friendship, that pure and active flame which will so soon be extinguished in my breast. O ! let it not exhale with my last breath ! Receive it, let it be revived in you, and I shall then not cease to exist— But,” continued he, “ feel my strength fail me. Complete the gratification of all I wish ; let my last looks enjoy the light of so dear an union. I had indulged the idea that you would yield to the entreaty of your dying friend, and every thing is prepared for the ceremony. In the name of every tie, of every feeling that unites us, let no more time be lost.”

The Duchess and Isambard were unable to make any reply ; but Oliver, now persuaded of their compliance, gave the appointed signal. At the same instant the door opened, and the priest appeared, clad in the sacred vestments, according to Oliver’s directions ; and with him Theobald,

Giaffar,

Giaffar, Angelbert, Lancelot, and Zemni, as witnesses to the marriage. All the Knights, in deep affliction, advanced in silence, and surrounded Oliver's bed. The priest approached the couch, near which was spread a long purple mantle, the gift of Beatrice. On removing this mantle, an altar was discovered, which had been prepared in the morning. Oliver then entreated the Duchess and Isambard to approach it. O thou whom my heart had chosen," said she, "listen to the voice of the wretched Beatrice; for the last time let her express that invincible sentiment, that unhappy passion, which is going to accompany thee to the grave, there to mix with thy ~~ashes~~, and there to remain with thee! Thou shalt nevertheless be obeyed; thy sacred will shall be executed; and the care of fulfilling this duty shall still attach me to life! Yes; thy friend, when deprived of a brother, shall find the tenderest of sisters in Beatrice."—"Angel of comfort," interrupted Oliver with transport, "thy celestial voice has soothed my keenest anguish: yes, it seems as if thou hadst restored me to innocence and virtue." Oliver pronounced these

these words with enthusiasm, the paleness of his cheek disappeared, and his eyes sparkled with new fire. The Duchess contemplated him an instant with a kind of ecstasy; when observing his features change, and his colour fade, she rose abruptly, and, leaning on Theobald, advanced toward the altar. Oliver laid hold of the scarf of Witikind, which lay near him, and, putting it round him: "O Celanira," cried he, "I may now be allowed to resume it; I am now worthy to wear it!" Having uttered these words, Oliver joined his hands, and, raising them to heaven, continued in that attitude, with looks expressive of piety and contrition. When the ceremony was over, Isambard hastened to throw himself into the arms of his friend. The unhappy Duchess, who could scarcely breathe, slowly approached the bed. Oliver held out his languid hand to her: "O my sister," said he, "the wife of my friend, your sublime virtue has expiated all my errors." On finishing these words, his eyes were half closed—a doleful cry was heard throughout the room. Beatrice shuddered; she endeavoured to lean toward

toward the dying Oliver, but, sinking into the arms of Theobald, fainted away. Oliver sighed, and pronounced with an extinguished voice the names of Celanira and Beatrice. Zemni, bathed in tears, administered unavailing succour.—Isambard held him in his arms, and pressed his expiring friend to his heart. On a sudden Oliver opened his languid eyes; he beheld and recognised his brother: faithful friendship received his last look, and his last sentiment. “O my friend!” he said. He then reclined his head upon Isambard’s bosom—his eyes closed for ever—he expired.

8 MA64

THE END.

into  
iver  
hed  
rice.  
un-  
in  
l to  
his  
his  
last  
my  
his  
sed